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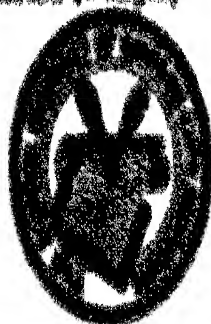
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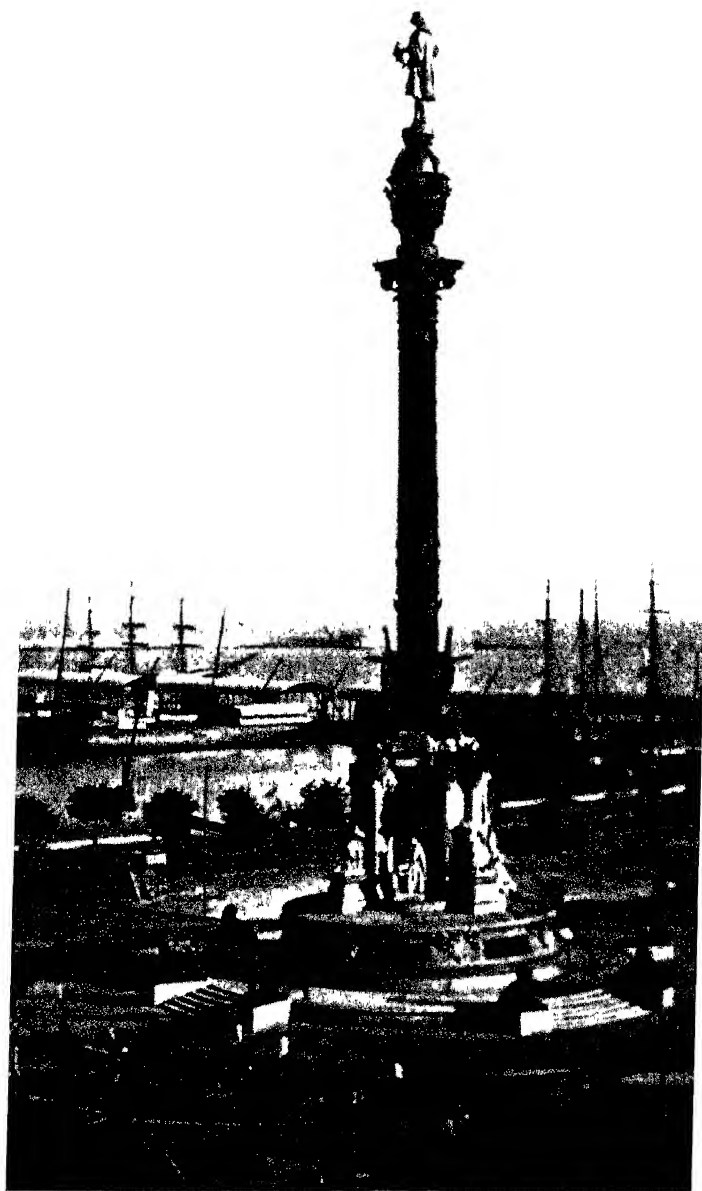
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BARCELONA

THE MONUMENT TO CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

# A PILGRIM IN SPAIN

BY  
AUBREY F. G. BELL

WITH TWENTY ILLUSTRATIONS  
AND A MAP

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## INTRODUCTION

**D**ESPITE modern civilization's dreary efforts at uniformity, the contrasts remain very sharp as one crosses the frontier from one country into another, and although the inhabitants on either side of the Bidasoa are of the same ancient Basque race the difference is not less keenly felt on France's south-western frontier than it is between French wit and the broad culture of Italy on the south-east. To a Basque or Basque-speaking person the contrast is less marked, but these are few, and usually the foreigner finds himself, as it were, in the very heart of Spain as soon as he has crossed Béhobie bridge. Fuenterrabía, so old and proud and beautiful, is strangely unlike the white, more ordinary houses of Hendaye opposite, across the river. In its splendid position at the mouth of the Bidasoa it nobly represents Spain, walled and fortified against the too easy understanding by foreigners, but full of individual charm and ancient culture and humanity within. The foreign traveller sometimes complains of discomforts in Spain. He never forgets the jolting on the head-long drive in an omnibus from the railway station of some small town over the cobbles. But what

business has the traveller in a railway omnibus at all? Some of the roads are excellent and have grown used to the motor-car; but the best traveller in Spain is he who goes leisurely, riding or on foot. If he must take the train he will at least have the grace to travel third-class: the plain wooden seats of these carriages are in summer pleasanter and cleaner than the dusty first-class cushions, and the peasants, as they clamber from one compartment to another, and drink and eat and laugh and sing, are a courteous and delightful company. The more one spends on travel in Spain the poorer it grows. There are comfortable and luxurious hotels, there are excellent express trains from Irun to Madrid, from Madrid to Barcelona or Seville, and one may make a tour of Spain without speaking a word of Spanish, or speaking to hardly anyone except American and German commercial travellers, well-informed and excellent persons in their way but scarcely representative of Spain. These comfortable tourists may boast to have seen some marvellous cities and buildings, but must not pretend to know Spain or the Spanish. Probably ninety per cent. of foreign travellers return without having been in a single Spanish village, and thus miss all that is most typical and delightful in Spanish life and character. Yet what crowding memories are left by even a single journey into Spain, what an endless variety of impressions jostling one another in the mind: the gloom and splendour of Gothic cathedrals, the delicate intricacies and beauty of

Moorish palaces, fountains in marble *patios*, somnolent as a mountain stream or summer seas, water flowing in sun and shadow through box-scented gardens of Seville or Granada, the angelus and *fiesta* bells ringing, the old ironwork and nail-studded doors, the many-shaped water-jars, the capa and mantilla, cowled, sandalled monks, proud Church dignitaries, a procession along a street's ancient granite walls, a bull-fight or religious *fiesta*, the solemn cries of street-sellers, *claveles* on roof and balcony, or set in the women's hair; stolid Velazquez faces that one vainly tries to forget, Greco-pictures too subtle and exquisite to remember, like some elusive memory of music. And how the traveller longs to return and make himself more closely acquainted with the fascinating country, with the *coches* and *tartanas* and swaying, jingling *diligencias*, of which not a few still happily survive, the dust-white or mud-splashed *zagal*, the proud bearing and grave courteous greeting of the peasants as they ride slowly along on mules and donkeys, or slumber in their awning-covered carts drawn by long strings of mules, their snatches of melancholy song, their great hats and velvet dresses and silver buttons; the inns and wayside *ventas*, chapels, convents and castles, and splendid profiles of towns seen from the road, towers and castles clear on the cloudless sky, narrow streets and wind-swept cobbles under the stars, cistus-scented bridle-paths, crystal streams and clustered villages; magnificent pine forests, bare jagged sierra-ridges against tur-



quoise skies, clear mountain-streams flowing over granite under woods of chestnut, the deep ravines and wooded flanks of the northern mountains (in the Basque provinces and Galicia and Asturias), the blue and purple bare rocky mountains of the south and east, that look so thin and fragile; yellow-brown plains or reddening vineyards and distances of blue mountains and snow, little blue and purple coves and bays, and sapphire or aloe-coloured Mediterranean seen across silver-grey olives and fruit-laden orchards. Of course the unconventional traveller must have a good knowledge of Spanish or half his pleasure is gone. But this is easily acquired, and acquired in the most delightful way, by reading the charming Spanish novels of the last fifty years, beginning with those of Juan Valera, for the sake of his excellent style, and with "Azorín's" "España" (1909), "Castilla" (1912), "El Paisaje de España visto por los Españoles" (1917), and Pérez Galdós' "Episodios Nacionales." And having thus made a beginning in the winter evenings at home, he will not willingly go to Spain before he has read the old *romances* and the *novelas de pícaros* and Cervantes' "Novelas Ejemplares" and "Don Quixote" in the original Castilian. After reading these and other volumes of Spain's great and ever-living literature, and a few books on the country such as Butler Clarke's "Modern Spain," and George Borrow's "The Bible in Spain," and Richard Ford's "Handbook" and "Gatherings in Spain," and Théophile Gautier's "Voyage en

Espagne," and G. E. Street's "Some Account of Gothic Architecture in Spain," he may proceed to Spain with a clear conscience and some expectation of enjoyment. The Spanish novels are the best of all guides to Spain, since, as Señor Don Rafael Altamira has remarked, in local colour Spain's novelists have attained "great triumphs," and the traveller who goes to Spain without reading them will be ill-equipped to appreciate much that is interesting and significant. There are novels of the Basque country, of Asturias, of Santander and the Montaña, Galicia, Seville, and Andalucía, Valencia and its Huerta, Barcelona, Toledo, Madrid, Oviedo, Avila, and other districts and cities. As to going on foot, there is some danger of idealizing this mode of travel, so varied, delightful, and vivid are its memories. The wisest traveller enjoys his travels not so much at the time as afterwards. To be honest, walking in Spain is never without great hardships, although they have their full compensation in other ways. Danger of robbery there is none, for it is realized that no one would go on foot who had any money, and in the inns the traveller will often have the experience of having his watch or money that he has left lying about returned to him, very rarely that of having them stolen. The roads are safe throughout Spain, thanks to the awe inspired by that splendid body of Guardias Civiles, a terror to evil-doers, but kindly and helpful to all honest men. The important point to remember is that Spaniards are totally unable to understand how any man in

his senses can go walking across the country for pleasure or interest, and they may prove the correctness of their argument by seeing to it that the pedestrian's pleasure is not wholly unmixed, and although he will, as ever in Spain, find much courtesy and kindness in his path, he cannot expect his career to be completely unchequered by accidents which may interest and amuse, but will certainly delay him. The climate need be no great hindrance, if wisely dealt with. The best time is in the long summer days, the walking to be done before 10 a.m. and after 5 p.m., the interval to be spent in a shady river-bed or pine forest. But if the pedestrian wishes to be less inexplicable to the shrewd, practical, conservative inhabitants, and to make his path easier, he will have something to sell, driving a donkey if his wares are too bulky to be carried on his person (little images or pictures of saints are easily carried). His whole position is then magically different. He is explained, he has fitted himself into the order of things, he has become part of the conventional formula under which life is conducted and a useful member of the community, instead of a tramp and a vagabond. His will then be an honoured and assured place at every inn, a welcome at every poor house, and every hour will provide fresh interest and insight into the life and character of one of the finest and most interesting peoples in Europe. If he suffers from a weakness for writing he will have material for a volume once every six weeks, and will soon have exhausted all

the London publishers. (From the present writer they were saved by the fact that his voluminous notes, buffeted in rough travel and drenched by rain and sea, proved utterly illegible, and the following are but scraps that survived either in his notebooks or his memory.) Such is the best, the only way to travel profitably in Spain. On the *diligencias* such a traveller will meet Spanish commercial travellers, men wide awake as to the ways of the more remote Spanish world, surrounded by their gigantic brass-bound boxes; but he himself should be careful to remain on a humbler grade in the profession—a mere pedlar or chapman of the Spanish road. If the traveller in Spain will always remember that he is one *caballero* dealing with another *caballero*, whether it be peasant or porter, café *mozo* or *limpiabotas*, beggar or thief, monk, official or grandee, he will nowhere in the world receive better treatment than in Spain, at the hands of both

Los que viven por sus manos  
Y los ricos.

The French sometimes speak of *la mauvaise grâce espagnole*, and all travellers know that the Spanish official is hard to move, and that the apparently needless waste of time taxes the patience of the bustling foreigner. But when a foreigner complains of his treatment in Spain one may be certain that the fault—either through his ignorance or through his contemptuous and perfectly imaginary

superiority—lies with the foreigner. If you behave to the Spanish with a proper courtesy and dignity they will never fail to go one better in this direction than you know how to go yourself, whereas threats or bluster even to the humblest village *alcalde* will inevitably lead to trouble. If you attempt to bully or appear to despise the Spanish you will find them, in George Meredith's description, "a queer people to meddle with." If you behave courteously as man to man you will come back laden with enchanting memories from a visit to the villages and cities of Spain.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Some of these pages are reprinted, with slight alterations, from the columns of "The Morning Post."

# A PILGRIM IN SPAIN

## I

### THREE CITIES OF ANDALUCÍA

#### SEVILLA

SEVILLE presents something of the undying fascination of an oasis in the desert. The surrounding country is flat, though fertile, and the tall graceful tower of the Giralda is to be seen many leagues away. The best way to come to Seville is not, however, across the plain, but up the smooth-flowing stream of Guadalquivir, the Great River, through woods of gleaming oranges, until Triana's lights glow a little ahead and the boat anchors by the Tower of Gold:

And lo, the Hunter of the East hath caught  
The Sultan's Tower in a noose of light.

From that moment Seville offers everywhere a feast of interest for eye and mind. To stay there is to be guest in the house of two hundred thousand people. The streets are merely the passages of this house. The proudest monarch, nay, even a penniless hidalgo of Castille, becomes humanized at Seville; the most curmudgeonly pessimist will

be seen smiling ; the miser loosens his purse-strings. The air, sky and sun of Seville, and the grace, wit and charm of its inhabitants, are the secrets of its perennial magic. By virtue of these it absorbs, assimilates, harmonizes, and has learnt the art of progress without radical change. It thus succeeds in attracting and delighting generation after generation.

From the top of the Giralda you may count a score or more of factory chimneys, yet somehow they are become as inoffensive as church towers ; the smoke rising from the Cartuja factory floats like some celestial cypress, a gorgeous purple-black on the blue sky ; the ungainliest steamer unloading timber or loading oranges or olive-oil along the quay on the Guadalquivir takes on a touch of charm and beauty ; even the flaunting palace of the new rich, with its too gaudy *azulejos*, soon seems to fall into line with the curving grace and exquisite colouring of Seville's streets. In vain do the anarchists and anticlericals rage and swell ; in vain does the Mayor forbid the night-watchman, the *sereno*, to chant the hours or the beggars to take the sun in the Court of Oranges. Seville remains Seville, an ancient and most living work of art, a magician turning everything it touches into beauty. Its great rivals, Granada and Cordoba, have splendid attractions, but they cannot wholly attain the humane temperate atmosphere of Seville. Seville is beautiful all the year through, and its climate is delicious, except in the torrid heat of summer, but it seems verily to live for the two months of April and May. Then

the humblest wooden stall is alive with flowers, the dark-red *claveles* (the old shape of nail-heads gave the flower its Spanish as its Portuguese (*cravos*) and German (*Nelken*) name) flower the roof-tops, fade in the growing dusk along the snow-white line of the *azotea* and gleam in the hair of even the poorest *sevillana*, and the tall palms of the *plazas* wave gently in a light wind filled with the spice of orange-trees in flower. That is the setting in which one sees those marvels of art that are Seville's buildings, sacred and profane, with their wealth of *azulejos*, mosaics, marble columns, *patios*, pictures, statues and curious work in silver and gold, wood and earthenware and marble, and watches the slow processions of Easter, Pascua of the Resurrection, as they pass, white and silver and blue, in the dusk when the first lamps are lit, or at midnight, through the crowded streets to the cathedral. All these ceremonies are a thing not to be missed, but in order to appreciate Seville's charm one must see it also in ordinary times. Many of the streets are but a yard or two yards wide; a man with a basket or a donkey takes the whole width of the street. Seville has an innumerable crowd of street vendors hawking their wares, from lace to fritters and sweet acorns. Their cries fill the morning air. A man with a grey donkey, its panniers of wire netting aglow with oranges, announces that they are sweeter than honey; a woman presses beautiful carnations from her basket on the passer-by; boys cry their newspapers; and a legion of sellers lines



the more popular streets. A baker passes perched on the tail of his ass behind great panniers filled with round loaves, or towards Christmas a drove of turkeys patiently make their way through the throng, driven by men and boys with long wands. Nearly all the houses of these popular streets have flowers and plants and creepers, a vine crosses from one side of the street to the other, a lamp burns before a wooden crucifix. And even from a quite ordinary street one has marvellous alluring glimpses through the iron entrance—the *reja* of the *patio*. The *patios* of Seville! White and green and crystal and blue, cool in the fiercest summer heat, with slender columns of white marble, and palms and other plants set between them, the silvery fall of water plashing in the centre of the court, the walls of glazed tiles, the floor of marble or of brick with a pattern of *azulejos*. Seville houses are often full of artistic treasures, beautiful pictures, carved chests, statues in bronze and wood and marble; some of them are perfect museums. That of the Condesa de Lebrija has a marvellous Roman mosaic discovered recently in an oliveyard at Italica; with its mellow hues and beautiful figures it covers the whole of a *patio*. Don José Maria Lopez Cepera possesses a crowd of pictures, the walls of his house resembling a museum, and some of them are of great interest. Seville's best pictures are in the Museum (who can judge Murillo without having seen him there?), in the Cathedral and in the Hospital de la Caridad, but the University

has a beautiful Ribera in its chapel and two Alonso Canos and some surprisingly good pictures by Velazquez' father-in-law, Francisco Pacheco. Seville Cathedral excels all others in grandeur and simplicity. It exercises a strange fascination on all who come near it. It becomes like a gigantic ancient mariner and the visitor cannot choose but return to it again and again, morning and evening. Its outer Court of Oranges, with its orange-trees, its clean-swept cobbles, its Moorish entrance and bronze gates, the stone pulpit in the wall, from which a sermon is preached once a year, is all so delightful that one almost forgets the splendour that awaits one in the interior. In its apparently careless simplicity, the secret of much of the fascination of Spain, the court only requires the picturesque beggars who used to "take the sun" in its sheltered corners. On to this court look the quiet windows of the Biblioteca Colombina, rich in precious books and manuscripts. In the interior of Seville Cathedral there is little that is tawdry, much that is of great antiquity, and treasures of carving and exquisite pictures appear here and there in the gloom. There is electric light, but it has only the effect of bright dots in the immensity, like stars in a night sky, and more charming are the little olive-oil lamps kept burning perpetually before some shrine or picture. The wealth of this cathedral in gold and silver, including the marvellous silver monstrance by Arfe, and vestments (they alone would require a whole day to examine properly),

is worthy of a country where the Roman Catholic religion has maintained itself for so many centuries. It is a wonderful sight to see this vast cathedral thronged from wall to wall by a surging mass of people as the procession's *pasos* enter slowly from the street; the columns are sumptuously dressed in red velvet for the occasion, choir and organ are heard at their best and a crowd of expectant sightseers is there. But more charming, more characteristic and genuine, is the cathedral seen at vespers at the close of a short winter day. There are barely a dozen persons present at the service. A procession, this time not of *pasos* but of carriages, has gone out to the fashionable promenade, the Paseo de las Delicias; scarcely one remains of those light comfortable carriages in the Seville squares, nearly a hundred of them posted round the palm-lined Plaza de San Fernando, a double line of them in the Plaza del Duque de la Victoria near a row of orange-trees crowded with ripe fruit. Humbler folk take the tramcars to the Trinidad and on to the Ventas, or content themselves with sauntering in the Parque de Maria Luisa closer at hand. But all are eager to "take the sun" before the only cold known at Seville, that of the night hours after a cloudless day. "Jeder sonnt sich heute so gern." The cathedral is deserted. For an hour the sound of prayers and chanting goes up from the choir stalls and sounds through the empty aisles. The unattended service seems an appeal to those who refuse to hear, but it is not so really,

it is rather an affirmation of strength. The world may go its way, fashions change and pass, sects rise and fall, but here through the centuries faith and hope abide for those who have wearied of the world and all its ways. In the gloom of the winter afternoon and the growing dusk tiny patches of red and purple vestments appear brightly lit here and there in the dark stalls. The boy in Murillo's picture of the Guardian Angel is faintly lit by an olive lamp burning below it, but the gracious angel's face above it is fading into shadow; shadow too masks the soft outlines of Alonso Cano's beautiful Madonna; but in one of the chapels to the left as one looks towards the choir from the Guardian Angel, Murillo's Saint Anthony is still clearly visible, and, round the cathedral above, the stained-glass windows gleam in their full splendour of greens and browns and purples against the last light of day. Seville is always beautiful, but at evening it has a special magic. Here, where there is scarcely one dull day in seven, the sun sets in a golden sky with little cloud wisps and skeins and wires of fine gold. The Guadalquivir takes a metallic lustre in the sunset and the sails of heavily laden boats glow white in the evening's dusk. It is a busy scene by day. The river is then a mixture of olive-green and chocolate colour, with a surface gleam like that on ancient *azulejos*; seagulls circle and settle on the water, and sea-going ships lie at anchor all along the left bank. Opposite are white houses and a grass-grown bank

near Triana, green fields of wheat and dark squares of orange-trees. Along the quay on the Seville side lie thousands and thousands of cases of bitter oranges weighing some 150 lbs. each and looking like little white coffins. These fragile boxes of poplar-wood are packed with oranges—some five hundred to a case—so that they bulge out on top; every now and then one bursts before it is embarked and a cascade of golden oranges tumbles over the quay. In a couple of months as many as 150,000 cases will have been taken away, about a million oranges daily, chiefly to London, Manchester, and Liverpool, for marmalade. There is not much wheeled traffic in Seville, most of the carrying is done with strings of donkeys, which have flexible capacious panniers of esparto grass, yellow like straw, and grown chiefly near Almería on the east coast. If one follows one of the rosaries of donkeys, grey donkeys with yellow and red trappings, one will probably soon come to the market, a busy scene, with a motley host of hucksters standing or sitting on the pavement on the outskirts of the market. An old woman has spread her little mound of gold rings on the pavement, a man displays his store of shoes and slippers (*zapatos y babuchas*). The objects for sale are endless in their variety. In the Calle de la Feria a fair is held once a week, and the street is lined with little shops of old iron, books, pictures, and many odds and ends. A youth came into one of these shops with five pennies, all his earthly goods, to buy a tattered copy of Dicenta's play,

“ Juan José ”; but the woman of the shop on one side of him, and her husband on the other, poured in volley after volley to the effect that the book was a valuable book and that he could not have it for a farthing less than one peseta, till the tears stood in his eyes and he was about to depart sad and humbled when a fourth person intervened and provided the necessary half-peseta. His gratitude was strange and touching; no doubt he was to act in some amateur theatricals got up by the workmen, the people here, as in most parts of Spain, being exceedingly fond of drama. Many of those who cannot write or read are poets and can appreciate if not themselves compose the *cantares* or *coplas* (quatrains) which form not the least interesting and beautiful chapter of Spanish poetry. They should be heard sung in the soft light of a Seville evening, when the first lamps glow in the gathering dusk. The subject of many of these quatrains, as of the *cantigas* of Portugal, is of course love, jealousy, parting, despair :

Era tan dichoso antes  
 De encontrarte en mi camino,  
 Y sin embargo no siento  
 El haberte conocido.

(How happy was I ere I met  
 Thee in my way,  
 Yet to have known thee no regret  
 Is mine to-day.)

A las niñas de tus ojos  
 Les tengo de ir a pedir  
 Que me entierren en su fondo,  
 Que ya no quiero vivir.

## A PILGRIM IN SPAIN

(I would crave this boon, to lie  
 In the apple of thine eye :  
 There to me now burial give  
 Since I wish no more to live.)

Para pasar por tu calle  
 No necesito farol :  
 Tus ojos son dos luceros  
 Que relumbran más que el sol.

(When I pass along thy street,  
 Lantern need I none,  
 For thy fair eyes are two lamps  
 Brighter than the sun.)

Al verte las flores lloran  
 Cuando entras en tu jardín,  
 Porque las flores quisieran  
 Todas parecerse a ti.

(When thou enterest thy garden  
 All the flowers weep to see  
 One so fair, for all the flowers  
 Wish that they were like to thee.)

Quisiera ser, mana mfa,  
 Cuando rezas el rosario,  
 Cuentecica entre tus dedos,  
 Y oración entre tus labios.

(Sister mine, O were but I,  
 When thou prayest thy rosary,  
 The bead between thy finger-tips  
 And the prayer upon thy lips.)

La pena y la que no es pena,  
 Todo es pena para mi :  
 Ayer penaba por verte  
 Y hoy peno porque te vi.

(Sorrow and that which should grieve not  
 Both alike to me bring only sorrow :  
 One day I longed sadly to see thee  
 And was sad to have seen thee the morrow.)

One of the intensest of all the quatrains occurs both in Castilian and Portuguese :

Por ti me olvidé de Dios  
 Por ti la gloria perdí,  
 Y ahora veome sola  
 Sin Dios, sin gloria y sin ti.

(For thee I lost my soul,  
 For thee my God I left,  
 And now I am alone,  
 Of God and thee bereft.)

It has the substance and finish, the perfect shape, and the passionate and serene intensity of a dark-red *clavel*. The same qualities are to be found in the famous *madrigal* of Gutierre de Cetina, one of Seville's sixteenth-century poets :

Ojos claros, serenos,  
 Si de un dulce mirar sois alabados  
 ¿Porque, si me mirais, mirais airados?  
 Si cuanto más piadosos  
 Más bellos pareceis a aquel que os mira,  
 No me mireis con ira  
 Porque no parezcáis menos hermosos.  
 ¡Ay tormentos rabiosos!  
 Ojos claros serenos,  
 Ya que así me mirais, miradme al menos.

(Clear eyes serene,  
 Since for your gentle looks you are so praised,  
 Why thus on me in anger are you raised?  
 Since, mercy mirrored there,  
 To him who sees more lovely is your glance  
 Look not on me askance,  
 That so you may not seem to be less fair.  
 O torment of despair!  
 Fair eyes serene  
 Rather look thus on me than leave unseen.)



Some of the Spanish quatrains are satirical, with a flavour of cynicism, but these are of a less popular character; often their authors are well-known poets :

En este mundo traidor  
 No hay verdad ni mentira,  
 Que todo está en el color  
 Del cristal con que se mira.

(In this world of many mazes  
 There is nothing false or true :  
 All depends upon the hue  
 Of the glass through which one gazes.)

El pensamiento libre  
 Proclamo a alta voz  
 Y muera el que no piense  
 Lo mismo qui pienso yo.

(Liberty of thought  
 Loudly I proclaim  
 And death to him who thinks not  
 As I think the same.)

Con arte y con engaño  
 Vivo la mitad del año  
 Y con engaño y arte  
 Vivo la otra parte.

(By guile and tricks  
 I live months six  
 And all the while  
 By tricks and guile.)

But more suited to the lovely Seville evenings are the love quatrains sung to a melancholy strain :

Eres tu la que quitas  
 Todos los rayos al sol,  
 A la nieve la blancura,  
 Y a la luna el resplandor.

(Thou robbest the sun,  
Of its rays clear and bright,  
The snow of its whiteness,  
The moon of its light.)

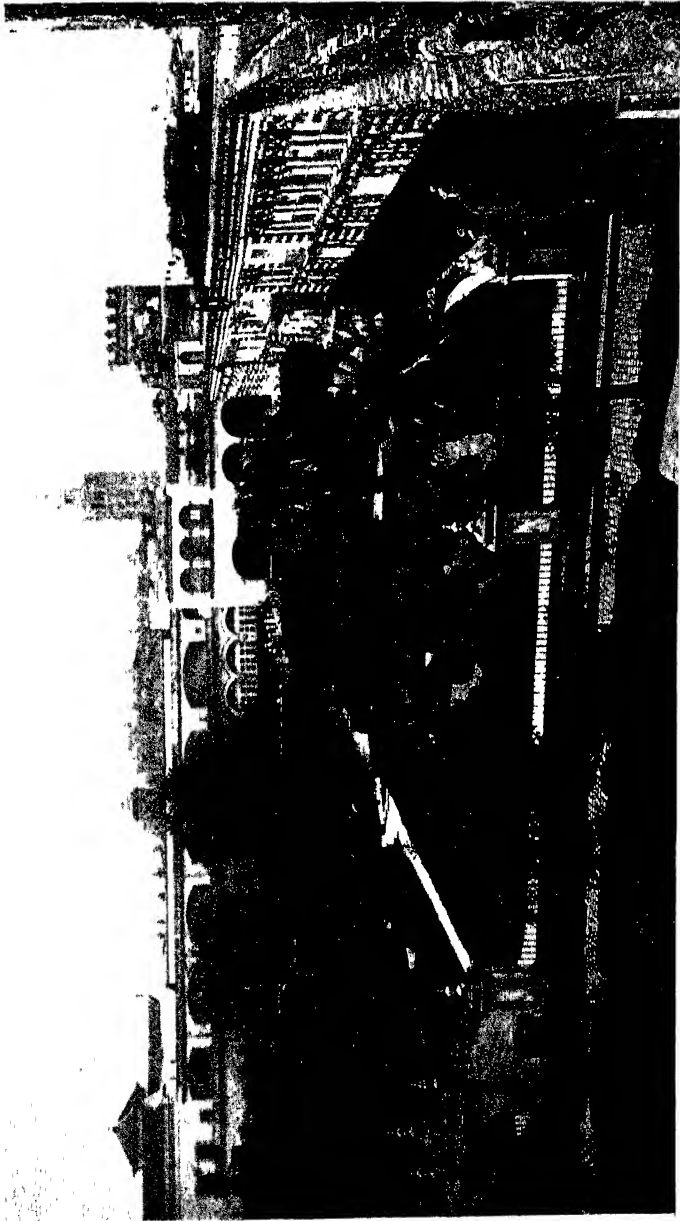
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There are some delightful antiquity shops at Seville, but one must not expect to obtain great bargains. The dealers themselves are often hard put to it to replenish their stocks. They find it hardly worth while to search in the villages of Spain, which have either been already denuded of their treasures or have learnt to ask extortionate prices; but they buy a good deal from convents. As much as £20 may be asked in a Seville shop for a fine old carved chest, one of the kind that one might have bought in a Basque farm twenty years ago for a hundred francs. Seville's houses, when not all whitewashed, so that the streets lie white as snow gleaming under the blue sky, are washed in many delicate shades of blue, green, yellow, pink and brown; but nearly all have a rim of white along the flat roofs lined with pots of carnations and other flowers. Here is the charming and irregular Calle de los Angeles, here the beautiful and typical Calle Alvarez Quintero in many colours, with ferns, palms, geraniums and creepers along its iron balconies; here the white Calle de Lope de Rueda, the Plaza de Alfaro and the Plaza de Santa Cruz with a garden and the remains of Murillo and the Jardines de Murillo (outside the garden wall of the Alcazar) filled with oranges and roses flowering by white pillars. There are

gardens everywhere, great and small, in Seville, and such gardens! In those of Santelmo (the Parque Maria Luisa) one is glad of shade even in December, when there is a lovely profusion of roses and oranges everywhere, the place is filled with their scent. The chrysanthemums are just over and the camellias are not yet in flower, but plumbago, maurandia, periwinkles, jasmine, jonquils and many other flowers are out, and roses, roses everywhere. Low-clipped hedges of sweet-scented myrtle border a pond of green stagnant water with waterlilies afloat on its surface, and there are avenues with arcades of cypress, tall date-palms and eucalyptus trees, trellises of honeysuckle and roses, long seats of glazed tiles, and many fountains, often likewise covered with glazed tiles. The Fuente de los Toreros has many coloured *azulejos* with most spirited scenes of bull-fighters, girls in mantillas and other characteristic types, among which often repeated, although always with slight variations, for all these *azulejos* are made by hand at Triana, stands out that of a peasant riding on the tail of his ass, with his huge shapeless felt hat, a kerchief round his head beneath it, patched trousers and a slender stick in his hand. Even more delightful are the extensive gardens of the royal Alcazar. There orange-trees bow their fruit over clipped myrtle hedges, white jasmine festoons and flowers half-way up the tall trunks of date-palms, hedges of monthly roses stand above seats of ancient *azulejos*, mingling their scent with the scent of

oranges in the sunny air, and masses of white jonquils and dark-blue irises are in flower. There are fountains and cypress-arches, many-pillared summerhouses, creepers and flowers everywhere. Even on a winter afternoon the air is all scented with myrtle and oranges. The Alcazar, which still fulfils its proper purpose as a royal palace, has halls not unworthy of Granada's Alhambra, and is haunted with historic memories and traditions. It is close to the Cathedral, and the tall tower of the Giralda may occasionally be seen from the gardens; indeed, the view of it from here is of peculiar beauty. Pink in the sunset, of a pink to vie with the afterglow on the summits of the Sierra Nevada, in the cold light of day this beautiful tower is a creamy grey with slender white columns on its surface and ornamentation of dark-blue *azulejos*; the white and blue-black doves that flutter and settle on it seem to have taken a protective colouring. Magnificent is the view from its splendid iron lilies and the revolving Giralda figure at the top. The white city is cut into huge blocks by the dark lines of the narrow streets, plants stand along the *azoteas* of the flat roofs, and here and there are open *patios* with trees, tree-planted squares, tall isolated palms and cypresses; scores of church towers also break the monotony of flat brick house-tops. The river, beyond the magnificent gardens of Santelmo and the Alcazar and Paseo de las Delicias, curves in silver gleams of light through green fields of corn, olives and oranges.

On the other side of the city in the distance show white *cortijos* and small whitewashed villages. Seville is growing and extending itself, especially by *casas de recreo* and farms in oliveyards on its outskirts beyond the *barrios* of Macarena and Triana. And beyond all is the dark line of the Sierra Morena, the Sierra de Algodonales, the Sierra de Ronda, and the faint outline of high-lying Carmona. On the other side of the Guadalquivir villages stand high on the hills, Santiponce, and San Juan de Aznalfarache, Castilleja de la Cuesta snuggling in a shoulder of the hill. Triana, to which a bridge fringed with lamps crosses directly from Seville, is a picturesque popular suburb, containing perhaps a tenth of the whole population of the city. It is worth more than one visit. One must go at evening to see its soft lights and the groups of idlers about its little stalls and taverns; by day to see the potters' shops: the *alfarerías*. Work is here carried on with great keenness, a profusion of glazed tiles and pottery of all kinds, from rough plates and bowls—small shallow bowls like that from which the child is drinking in Murillo's wonderful picture "La Sed" in the Hospital de la Caridad—selling for a few halfpence apiece, to elaborate jars and patterns. A few old skilled workmen produce these wares at an astonishing speed. A large water-jar is made in exactly one minute. And their shape is always pleasing and artistic. Fortunately they are eminently breakable, so that there is a perpetual demand. When man



SEVILLA

THE ALCAZAR—SHOWING THE GARDENS AND THE GALLERIES OF PETER THE CRUEL



is truly civilized he will eat and drink out of unglazed earthenware and do a great part of his cooking in earthenware pots, which give a better flavour than those of tin or iron. For the *azulejos* too there is a great demand. They are mostly very small (15 by 15 centimetres) and it takes about two hundred to make a square metre of them; but even when the larger factory-made tiles from Barcelona are used in the floors or sides of houses some of these hand-made tiles are set at intervals to give a more individual character. Two of the furnaces at Triana—they burn mainly crushed olive-stones, *oruja*, which produce great heat—used to be called Gallito and Belmonte, before Belmonte retired from the arena and Gallito was killed at Talavera, a city celebrated for its pottery. It was at Triana that the martyr saints Rufina and Justina lived in a potter's shop. In Goya's picture in Seville Cathedral they have all the air of *majas*, for Goya was essentially profane, and at their feet lie the remains of the statue of Venus which they broke in pieces. A great granite stone revolving mills glass for the varnish of the *azulejos*. The earth is brought cheaply in carts from Castilleja, the little white village on the hill on the right bank of Guadalquivir.

Instead of recrossing the bridge at Triana one may follow the right bank to the church of Santa Ana and the old convent of Los Remedios (now a factory) and cross the river by a ferry-boat opposite the Tower of Gold. Wonderfully soft are all the



lines and lights in the evening, the white lamps along the quay, the coloured lights here and there in the shipping like the glowing colours in a chemist's shop, and private lamps that begin to appear like glowworms here and there among the houses. Dark above the river stands the Torre del Oro, and behind it rises the Giralda tower, creamy-pink against the evening sky. It is just in doing little ordinary things at Seville—to cross the river in a boat, to saunter down a side street, to attend an everyday evensong, to barter for treasures in some neglected old shop—that one has fresh revelations, feasts of beauty and interest. Some of the streets, two or three yards wide, have no side pavements, but sink in the centre for the water to run off, and the houses thus rise out of the street itself, washed in many charming tints that harmonize like those of wild-flowers, with little iron balconies painted green or brown. On the flat roofs, tiled with red or yellow bricks, the *rosas de difuntos*, planted at the beginning of November, are in flower in December and January, and a little later come the first carnations. Wherever one goes there is beauty, and what is more, character : beauty spiced with *gracia*, the piquancy and charm of Palacio Valdés' *Hermana San Sulpicio*. One may now sometimes hear a *sevillano* say, " We wish to be like every one else " : words terrible to have to listen to. Even the *torero* nowadays conceals his pigtail and wears an ordinary suit of the latest fashion. But the *sevillano* cannot be like every one

else. Seville holds and moulds him. The customs and traditions are so many, and the world expects Seville to maintain them. The *seises*, who no longer dance at Toledo or in any other Spanish cathedral, still dance in front of the high altar in Seville Cathedral on three occasions during each year: in December for the Purísima eight times (December 8-15), on three successive days in Carnival and on nine days for the Festival of Corpus Christi in June. On Christmas Eve there is the Misa del Gallo, Cock Crow Mass, Messe de Minuit, with singing of *villancicos* to the accompaniment of the rustic music of *panderetas*, *palillos* and *zambombas*. On the Eve of Epiphany the procession of the Kings passes through the city. Three boys "pompeusement parés" are mounted on donkeys, or perhaps on real camels from a passing circus, and bear gold and frankincense and myrrh, accompanied by a crowd of children carrying torches. There are many other picturesque customs not witnessed by those who throng to the magnificent processions of Holy Week, which are kept from losing their character and beauty and becoming a mere convention and show for foreigners owing to the real religious fervour of the people. These processions are still a thing of the people. It is the genuine democracy of Spain that everywhere enchants the foreigner. It is equally evident in life and art. It brings the proudest *hidalgo* and poorest peasant together; it makes religion a familiar thing of the street. In the same spirit

exquisite columns and capitals and sculptured arches often have for their near neighbour rough tiles or cobbles. In the same way in the Sierpes, that charming street in the heart of Seville, a paved way where no wheeled traffic ever comes, humble stalls are to be seen close to splendid shop-windows and the glass fronts of the clubs. The shadow of the Giralda at sunset in December touches a small white tower in the distance. One is told that it is the house of one who has recently made a fortune in olive-oil: if so it is emblematic, for Seville, like a Cartuja convent housing an earthenware factory, touches everything with its own spirit, and although its life is in some respects wholly pagan and the common people are rather anti-clerical than the reverse, it is nevertheless a religious city. Every morning, at the elevation of the Host, the cathedral bell sounds across the city, and at dawn and noontide and dusk the thrice three notes of the Angelus invite to prayer. The devotion of the people to the Virgin and the Saints is very real. It is indeed perhaps a remnant of paganism, that alloy in the Christian religion which has given it much of its strength and fibre throughout the centuries.

Seville, constantly breathing in new life from its land and sea connections, growing rich with the increasing production of oranges and olives, has the skill to be neither ancient nor modern but a combination of both, subtly developing and dovetailing the new into the old. Toledo stands in-

flexible, unchanging ; Seville bends and changes and develops, yet remains the same : they might be called the mountain and the river of Spanish cities. The Andalusian is witty and intelligent, fond of pleasure, subtly malicious and inclined to delicate mockery, but loyal, friendly and courteous ; for the passing foreigner at least he will do everything in his power to make his visit a thing of Seville, a thing ideally pleasant.

### GRANADA

Toledo has its *cigarrales*, Barcelona its pleasant *torres*, but could anything be more delightful than a Granada *carmen*, Carmen de San Rafael, Carmen de la Virgen, within full view of the Alhambra and the Sierra Nevada ? One of the sources of Granada's beauty is the contrast between the crumbling walls of ancient buildings and the freshness of those eternal snows, between the crude or mellow colours of stone and soil and the soft whiteness of the Sierra. It is from some of these *carmens* or from the churches above the Albaicin that one has the loveliest views of the Alhambra and of the Sierra Nevada beyond. To the left is a valley leading up to bare softly-folded red-brown mountains, aglow in the sunset, and further to the right stand three grey-green hills, on the third of which is the grey Generalife with its veranda of white arches and long line of tall dark cypresses. On the slope above it, below the Silla del Moro, are olives in a grey soil, and beyond them more olives, but now in a bright rust-coloured soil.

Beyond these again the hill-side is of a darker, softer red, and above that rises the long soft line of snow peaks, against which stands the Alhambra on its abrupt hill, above the rapid streams of Darro and Genil and elm-trees that in winter and spring are a faint purple: the long line of mellow red-brown golden wall, the dark-brown roofs of tiles, the slender white *ajimez* columns which are almost the only indication of the loveliness within. Of the Sierra Nevada itself, without the Alhambra in the foreground, the most enchanting views are to be had from some of the halls of the Alhambra, or through the cypress avenue leading to the Generalife, or from one of the slopes beyond. In the folds of some of these grey thyme-scented hills everything is concealed from view except the mountain-range above the snow-line—the long succession of softly outlined peaks in their marvellous loveliness of much-melted snows. Or, again, from the Torre de la Vela at sunset: the clear snow outline above brown mountains and red soil and the horizon sky of pale gold along hills of intense leaden blue, and to the left of them the rose-tinted snow summits sharp against a sky of ashen grey. Below, Granada lies outspread, and beyond gleams of living silver come from irrigated fields in the plain. Too many at Granada confine themselves to the great sights—the Cathedral, the Alhambra, the Generalife—and have no time to explore the quaint streets in the old parts of this fascinating city, nor to take a walk along the river Genil in the direction of the

Sierra Nevada. And unless their stay is of more than a few days, they have some excuse: so lovely are the Alhambra and Generalife in themselves and in their views of the snowy Sierra. At most the hurried visitor has a moment for the gipsies, to see their costumes and customs. There is a good deal to be said for living in the ground. The earth is a wonderful blanket, keeping off both heat and cold, and the earth-dwellings of some of these gipsies are admirably cool in summer and sheltered and dry in winter. The men, with wide *calañés* hat, a stick in their hand, their furtive eyes glancing and shifting like lizards, may be seen any day trying the paces of a donkey or drinking in turn from a large wineskin in some obscure tavern.

The streets of the Albaicin are scarcely a yard wide, and in those that go steeply up from the river there is but a foot-wide ribbon of sky appearing between the projecting irregular eaves of tile and wood. The houses of these streets—the Street of the Most Holy, the Street of the Furnace of Glass, the Street of the Furnace of Gold—are washed in white or in various hues of blue, salmon, or yellow. They have little white-pillared *patios*; sometimes the street passes through an arch of brickwork, a lamp burns beneath a little glass shrine in the wall, and old iron street-lamps are fixed in the walls. The iron balconies are full of ivy, geranium, roses, and other flowers; sometimes they are piled high with dark-green melons. Here and there one comes on an ancient *alfarería*, a

potter's field of red clay. The view from the cobbled court in front of the church of San Nicolás above is one of the finest in Granada, that is to say, in Europe. Here of a winter afternoon a few old men "take the sun," and at sunset fold their cloaks closely about them and go away slowly in various directions.

Granada is a great semicircle of white houses and dark-brown tiled roofs, with many brown or white church towers. Many of its modern houses are tall and whitewashed, and have green shutters and green blinds. Some of the older houses have verandas of white arcades immediately under the roof, giving the city a conventual air. A few tall cypresses, orange-trees, or palms grow in the courts of these houses.

It is worth while to have leisure in Granada; to watch the smoke go up from the plain below, blue and silver and golden in the setting sun, like an evening sacrifice, or a flight of white doves sun-lit beneath the Generalife; to contemplate the snow mountains from a hundred different angles and in a hundred different lights, through the gaps of a cypress hedge, or across the yellowing tops of mighty plane trees, or in isolated glory when the sun has departed gradually from the highest towers of the Alhambra, and deserted the red-brown slopes beneath the snow-line, until the only light is in the glowing rose-petals of the surpliced peaks in the afterglow. A faint sound of traffic or of children at play comes up from the city in the silence.

To climb the Cerro de Mulhacen (11,500 feet) from Granada is a long and difficult expedition; to gaze at its snows from the halls of the Alhambra is a delicious laziness, but laziness still. One may follow the middle course, which Dante deprecated, and live without praise or blame by taking the path of the snowmen (Camino de Neveros) to Cenes de la Vega, a grey village of a hundred householders on the banks of the Genil, or to Pinos, higher in the mountains.

The constantly changing views of the Sierra and of the city of Granada are a magnificent reward. Granada appears in its circle of mountains, the cathedral showing to advantage from this side, and the Red Towers (Torres Bermejas), built of reddish stone, which glows in the sunset near snow-white walls, and, below, the twin towers of Nuestra Señora de las Angustias, patroness of the city.

The path in one place is of chrome yellow soil, bordered irregularly on either side by aloes, and there are gleaming white farms (*cortijos*) among glossy grey and grey-green olives and soil of a gorgeous deep red. Rust-coloured and various hues of brown and red and yellow, with grey tufts of dwarfed broom, the ground then rises to the snow-line, and it is the rich and changing colours of the soil below that make those snows a joy for ever, as well as their exceeding softness by reason of the African sun, which is for ever melting them, without being able to melt them away. In an oliveyard men, women, and children are beating

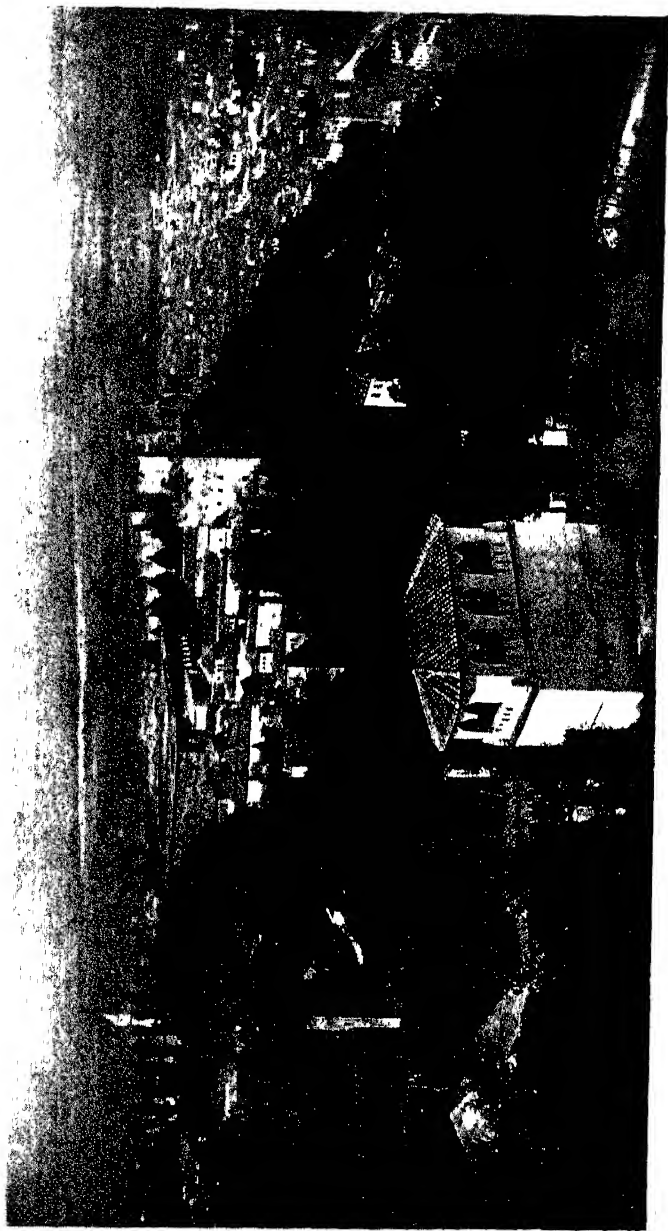


down the olives, and an ass stands all day motionless, waiting while the olives are being gathered. Almost every Andalusian owns a donkey; both in Granada and the surrounding country one meets rosaries of grey donkeys with magenta trappings, their panniers laden with stones or sand or bread or flour, or even cackling hens for market. Even the priest going to the cemetery outside the city jogs along on a donkey. The peasants one meets are usually empty-handed, stick and everything else being in the panniers.

In the afternoon a valley to the left of the path, with a red mountain at its head, turns to wonderfully soft deep green and brown and purple, while the peaks far above to the right are still in all the glory of the sunshine; the long smooth line of snow peaks, and farther to the right a far craggier range which the snow only succeeds in powdering, and which slopes down at last to the Suspiro del Moro. A sound of bells ringing comes faintly from Granada.

So having spent perhaps but a few hours, never more precious than at Granada, one returns with a good conscience and many enduring memories to contemplate the sierra from Alhambra's Mirador de Daraxa, or from the church of San Nicolás, the warm colours of the Alhambra set beneath the snows of the sierra. A deep gully, planted in terraces and overgrown with cactus, separates it from the Generalife.

Besides the many beautiful old things to be



GRANADA  
THE ALHAMBRA—A GENERAL VIEW



found in the antiquity shops in the steep street going up to the Alhambra and in the Alhambra itself: century-old mantillas of cream-coloured lace, worked in a pattern of pomegranates, sixteenth-century *azulejos* with the lustre of rainbow hues in them, to be used as letter-weights, delightful work in wood and many other materials, there is much excellent modern work, such as lace mantillas, and especially the beautiful tables and boxes inlaid with horn and ivory. Like most Spanish cities, Granada has lately waxed prosperous, and much has been done for it by the enterprise of the Duke of San Pedro de Galatino. But all Granada's recent progress has had no power to spoil its beauty. The attraction of the Alhambra is ever fresh, as is the magic of Victor Hugo's often quoted lines :

L'Alhambra, l'Alhambra, palais que les génies  
Ont doré comme un rêve et rempli d'harmonies.

The Alhambra is an harmonious dream to be seen and not described, a delicious music beyond the power of words. The beauty and interest of the pictureless Alhambra, its marvels of pattern and colour, are so overwhelming that one scarcely connects Granada with pictures. Yet in the cathedral is some of the most delightful work of that Spanish Andrea del Sarto, Alonso Cano; and it is delightful too to climb to the rooms in the Cathedral where he lived and from which he could look down on to the canons in the stalls at service, which he ought as a prebendary of the Cathedral

himself to have been attending. It was Cano, artist to the finger-tips, who, when dying, is said to have told those who had brought him an in-artistic crucifix to take the ugly thing away. (Even San Juan de la Cruz, the mystic poet, declared that a badly wrought image might diminish one's devotion.) Whether one has Alonso Cano's consuming passion for art or a love of Nature, interest in mountains, architecture or humanity, one will never repent the spending of many days in this southern city of the eternal snows.

#### CORDOBA

Cordoba by many is thought to be little more than a name and a mosque, but it is much more than that, and in fact deserves a visit of several days. It takes rank legitimately with Seville and Granada in the glory and grandeur of Andalusian cities. Its lion, corresponding to Seville's Cathedral and the Alhambra of Granada, is of course the Mosque, externally a somewhat forbidding and ungainly mass, but inside a wonder of marble columns interlacing like the avenues of a forest. From certain points one has a wonderful overwhelming view of these avenues of columns, but more usually some obstacle intervenes preventing complete satisfaction and leaving scope for the imagination. Its nineteen aisles open on to the Court of Oranges, so charming and so still with its ordered orange-trees and plashing fountains. The work of restoring the Mosque is proceeding slowly

but skilfully. When the stripes of glaring red paint above the columns have been removed so as to reveal the original lines of grey and red brick, and the wooden *artesonado* ceiling restored throughout and the pavement completed of marble on a lower level, and perhaps the nineteen entrances into the Court of Oranges thrown open, the Mezquita more than ever will be one of the wonders of the world. It is the greatest, but not as is commonly supposed the only, attraction of Cordoba. From the top of the bell tower in the Court of Oranges one sees the city spread out below: its many churches, its low houses with tiny squares, like square wells, in the centre of their four roofs, with an occasional orange- or lemon-tree in the square. The gardens of the Alcazar, now private property, flanked by the Torre de la Paloma and the Torre del Diablo, descend in plots of scented flowers, heliotrope, carnations, geraniums, and many fruit trees, lemon and orange and pomegranate, to the very edge of the smooth-flowing Guadalquivir. Opposite is the Casa de las Pavas, which once housed the Inquisition and the Jardin de los Martires, where was the *quemadero*. The river's chocolate-coloured stream with metallic blue reflections flows through sand and tamarisk, wide pastures where bulls are reared, and softly-outlined hills of plough-land; on its left it passes a suburban hamlet, the Campo de la Verdad, across the great Roman bridge, and on its right reflects the long line of the snow-white houses of Cordoba. On the other side of the city

is a whole quarter of low whitewashed, narrow-windowed workmen's houses, the Campo de la Merced, Campo de San Antonio, Campo de la Madre de Dios. The names here are all popular and indigenous. There is the Barrio de las Ollerías (the Potteries), de la Piedra Escrita (from an inscription on a fountain where gipsies and white-shawled women fill their tall pale water-jars), de los Piconeros, who go to the *sierra* for charcoal (*picon* means the thin twigs of charcoal): one sees the smoke of their fires ascending straight on a windless evening on the mountain-side, near where the Hermitas de Cordoba, with their white convent and hermits' cells, overlook the city. A little farther to the south-west Cordoba is dominated by the former Convent of the Hieronymites, a mighty massive building on the mountain-side. It is now a private house, having been bought in 1912 by the Marqués del Mérito, whose "Jerez" (sherry) and other excellent wines are well known in London, and whose ancestors owned land here centuries ago. The convent, damaged by the earthquake in 1755 and secularized in 1835, has now been thoroughly restored at endless cost and trouble, and has become a museum as well as a palace, for it is filled with every kind of artistic treasure, preserving, as do so many great houses in Spain, character in the midst of luxury. The sides of the convent, once the abode of a community of nearly five hundred, are covered with roses and snow-white jasmine. The mountain-side all round it is in

December covered with oranges and roses and is planted with many fruit trees and flowers. The situation is sheltered, excellent water abounds, and as from all the Hieronymite Convents of Spain the view is beautiful: on a cloudless day it extends across the plain to the snow-crowned summits of the Sierra Nevada beyond Granada. When one sees the houses and gardens and orchards along this mountain-side one understands the delight of the historian Sepulveda in his garden at the foot of the *sierra*. On a hill nearer Cordoba is the house of the Dukes of Hornachuelos, built on a sheer perpendicular rock; but it is some of the humbler little country-houses that have an especial charm. Here is one called "La Gitana" (The Gipsy), standing in a *finca* of a few acres. A path (or is it a mountain-torrent?) leads up to it between lichened walls of loose stones flanked by hedges of cactus and aloe. The house is surrounded by orange-trees, crowded with glowing fruit in December. A few years ago the best kind were selling at four *pesetas* (the *peseta* was then worth a little over a shilling) the hundred, sold off the tree; the "Naranja de China" at three *pesetas*, and the bitter orange (*agria* or *fuerte*) at two. Besides these various kinds of oranges, including also tangerines (*mandarina*) and blood-oranges, the *finca* has fruit trees of other sorts; a show of tall clustered jonquils (known popularly as *varitas de San José*, St. Joseph's little wands, and by other names), and violets and periwinkles crowd round the roots



and trunks of pomegranate trees, on which the skeleton of a pomegranate hangs from the desolate bare branches, showing its teeth and somehow reminding one of a horse laughing. The house itself is blue and white (*azulejos* and whitewash), with a roof of dark-brown tiles and a little square tower. Its court has seats of glazed tiles, and one of the walls of the house has an image of the Virgin, also in glazed tiles. Pots of carnation are everywhere, and a foison of beautiful salmon-pink roses are in flower above the jonquils. It would be difficult to imagine a more charming little place. It was deserted but for the overseer (*capataz*), who was fortifying himself against the cold with chestnuts and a kind of brandy before going out with his gun to shoot *zorzales*. A fire gleamed on the floor of his humble house or hut, and on a shelf above a medley of objects, axes, baskets, a bottle of brandy, were illumined by its glow. He had a supply of sweet acorns, gathered from the mountain-side, and pressed them on the visitor as far better than oranges (and indeed they are eatable, having somewhat the taste of hazelnuts, although far more insipid); but no sooner was a preference expressed for oranges than with Andalusian hospitality a score of them were gathered from the trees (they were not his). On a December morning the cold even in this protected region can be intense, when a mist descends or a subtle wind blows along the side of the *sierra*, but the strong southern sun soon asserts itself. Wonderful is the silence here on

one of these days of autumn mist. An acorn falling is a startling disturbance, and there is no sound but that of the slow deep-toned bells of black and dark-brown cattle grazing. A little beyond and below the Hieronymite Convent are the remains of the famous Moorish palace of Medina. It must not be thought that Cordoba itself is as dead as this ancient ruin, and that the inscription in the Mosque is emblematic of the whole city: only two words remain—Sistito, legito—the recommendation to stop and read, all the rest being now illegible. There is much of interest to be seen in Cordoba. There is a fresh and vigorous life here. The people seem mostly of rather stronger build than those of Seville, with more colour in their faces. On a day of *fiesta* many go out along the road leading to the Hermitas on the mountain-side. The Paseo del Gran Capitan is crowded, there are a few carriages, but the vast majority of holiday-makers are on foot, walking up and down this broad open promenade. One is glad to see a good many *capas*, both the old brown kind and the more fashionable black with bright silk lining. Cordoba's best shops are close by, in the Calle de la Concepción and the Calle del Conde Gondomar. In the poorer quarters people are seated all along the houses taking the sun, and groups of men, very picturesque in their spotless broad-brimmed hats of black or brown or grey felt, stand about, while in the taverns vast quantities of *amontillado* are gradually consumed by "little halves" (*un mediocito*); the cunning

*tabernero* supplies gratis small slices (*escopetas*) of fried meat, by means of which the thirst of his customers is mightily increased. There are little clean-kept taverns everywhere with "Vinos finos de Montilla" in barrels along the counter, each barrel marked with a number: 24 (which is the best), or 16 or 12 (which is inferior). From time to time a *señorito*, "muy arrogante" (short *chaqueta* with Astrakhan collar and "Cordoban hat," which, say the Cordobese, the Sevillians miserably imitate, giving it the name of broad-brimmed, *de ala ancha*), rides through the crowd, mounted on a splendid Andalusian steed. There is plenty of gipsy slyness here as in other Andalusian cities. A malicious saying runs:

Al Andaluz  
 Hazle la cruz;  
 Si es Sevillano  
 Hazla con la mano,  
 Si es Cordobés  
 Con las manos y los pies.

(You should make the sign of the Cross  
 An Andalusian when you meet;  
 If he's of Seville, with your hand,  
 If of Cordoba, with both hands and feet.)

On a Sunday morning the streets approaching the market are densely packed, chiefly by men dressed in black or brown, with their black or grey broad-brimmed hats, and through this motionless crowd women with great baskets slowly push their way. Humble families can now sometimes earn as much as one pound a day, but the head of the family

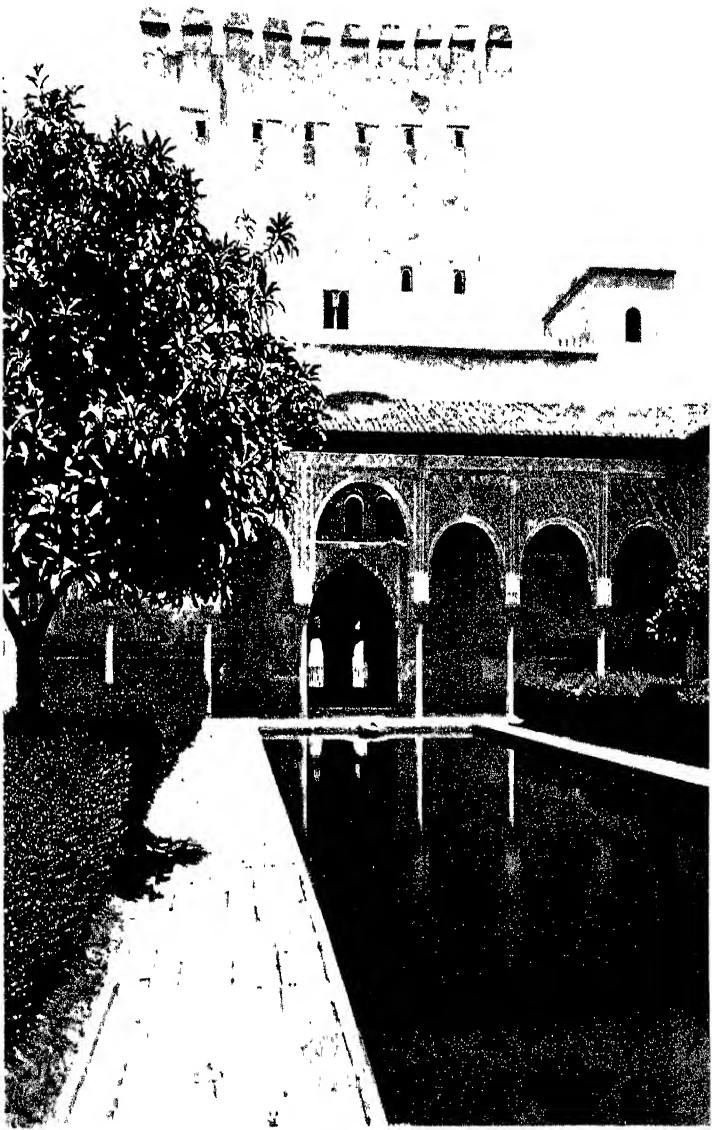
usually sees to it that the savings do not extend beyond the week-end. Economy scarcely enters into the traditions of the Andalusian, who lives happily from day to day, leaving the morrow to take care of itself and of his children. Is there not wine and tobacco, the theatre and the cinematograph? It is worth while to wander among the narrow streets of Cordoba's low houses. Many of the houses are whitewashed, but some of the narrower streets are all green and dark blue and bright yellow and saffron, hues often less soft than those of Seville, although there are also light blues and light greens. Occasionally one comes upon a small silversmith's shop, where men and women patiently form patterns with the threads of silver in their rough filagree work. The houses, like flowers, all open to the sky, are much lower than those of Seville and have a severer look. The iron balconies mostly have no plants or flowers, but Cordoba has many gardens and orange-trees, and the *patios* of its houses, although they may not be the elaborate, the delicious marble and fountain *patios* of Seville, are nevertheless very delightful. These rougher Cordoba courts often have no fountain, in the poorer houses they may even be paved with cobbles, but they are shaded by an orange-tree or a lemon-tree crowded with glowing fruit, or by a date-palm, and offer unforgettable glimpses from the street: a picturesque group of humble folk seated on low chairs of *esparto*, a basket of recently gathered lemons on the clean-

swept cobbles, creepers along the wall, scented *malva luisa* (verbena), plants and flowers everywhere. The low rambling house of the Marqués de Viana in the Rejas de Don Gomez has no fewer than seventeen courts. In its Court of Oranges the oranges have been trained along the walls like plums in an English garden and are a beautiful sight on a clear winter day: their thick clusters glowing at the whitewashed corners against the blue sky, and the gold adds a peculiar magic to the green, white and blue, always a beautiful combination of colour, whether it is, as here, of white-wash, leaves and sky, or of sky, pines and snow or sea, seaweed and foam. In the Court of Cypresses the walls are covered with scented geranium and heliotrope. All these courts lie open to the sky, with nothing but the brown towers of the churches of Santa Maria and San Agustin in sight. The convent church of Nuestra Señora del Carmen—the convent has but three or four Carmelite friars—in the Campo de San Antonio has much beautiful carved work besides its famous *artesonado* ceiling, and other pictures besides the *retablo* by Valdés Leal. The church of Nuestra Señora de Fuentisanta is famed less for its artistic treasures than for its well; the walls of the church are covered with votive offerings, and hundreds of persons come to drink at the dirty-looking water. Marks on the outside of the church wall show the height reached by the flood of distant Guadalquivir in 1821, 1917, and other years. Cordoba's picture-

museum is small but contains some real treasures. It has some excellent pictures by Antonio Castillo y Saavedra, an artist less known to fame than he deserves, and some interesting ones by Bartolomé Bermejo (fifteenth-sixteenth century); while to lovers of Ribera his "Flight into Egypt" and the "Adoration" are alone a sufficient reason for visiting Cordoba. The light on the Virgin and Child in the "Adoration" is indeed wonderful; it illumines two other faces, that of a fifth is wholly in shadow; the light and colour and expression are alike magnificent.

Cordoba even more than Seville and Granada has a splendid past. Its street names still bear witness to the fame of many of its noble sons; few cities can boast such a galaxy of names. There is the Plazuela de Seneca, the Calles de Maimonides, Averroes, Lucano, Juan de Mena, Luis de Gongora, Cespedes, Anbrosio de Morales. Other streets have quaint ancient names such as Mucho Trigo (Much Corn) or Horno de Cristo (Christ's Oven). In the Plaza Major, formed by taller three-storied houses with protruding thick-barred iron balconies, are inns and little eating-houses: the Parador del Toro, Parador de San Antonio, La Antigua Paloma, La Verdadera Paloma, and narrow streets go off in all directions, painted delightfully in many hues. Some of the wider curving cobbled streets are also exceedingly picturesque and interesting. A good many carriages are to be seen in the Paseo del Gran Capitan, but mostly Cordoba is inhabited by humbler

folk who live in this pleasant climate none the less happily because they have no longer to toil in the Khalif's saddler shops ; although the people really flourished under the absolute rule of the Moors : it was the nobles and officials who might be invited to a banquet " après lequel ils ne mangeraient plus rien." Cordoba is less crowded nowadays, despite its reviving industry, yet it would be, one thinks, a city that one might live in happily, and there are expeditions into the country and good shooting on the mountain-side without the need of taking a train. A few days of winter may be cold enough, a few weeks of summer intolerably hot ; but except for this the climate is almost perfect, a paradise for the poor all the year round. They can exist with very little fuel and clothing, and have no incentive to toil overmuch. It must be remembered that if every man worked thoroughly during a reasonable number of hours each day the world would be a very terrible place to live in. Natural beauty, so abundant round Cordoba, must soon sink and disappear beneath the smoke and machinery set going by the industrious throng. Let us then praise idle men : is not a capacity for *otium* a part of the magnificent, magnanimous man of the ancient philosophers ? Employment is now provided for thousands by the great metallurgical works at Cordoba, and black smoke ascends from the plain where bulls graze in wide level pastures along the Guadalquivir. The advantages of the situation in the sheltered beauty of the foot-



GRANADA

THE ALHAMBRA—THE PATIO DE LOS ARRAYANES, OR COURT OF MYRTLES, SHOWING  
THE AMBASSADOR'S TOWER





hills of the Sierra Morena are becoming yearly more appreciated. New houses are built on the hill-side, and after a few years a great wild tract of *sierra* is converted into a Garden of Eden; indeed in this climate and fertile soil even the uncultivated hills are covered with scented shrubs and starred with rare flowers, so that they would themselves be considered gardens in a region less favoured of Heaven.

#### A VILLAGE OF ANDALUCÍA

The roads are solitary in Andalucía; men live in compact villages or in great white *cortijos*, farms set at wide intervals, with their long rows of white buildings giving shelter to herds of cattle and numerous *braceros* and casual tramps. The *braceros* work for their food and a few pence, which are spent on a rare feast-day visit to the nearest town or village. From time to time the solitude of the road is broken by a long troop of charcoal-laden donkeys, journeying slowly to the monotonous clapping of the large bell worn by their leader, and driven by men in pale-blue shirts and dark-brown trousers of velvet corduroy, red kerchiefs wound about their heads. Or a peasant on horseback passes closely muffled in his brown *capa*, a gun of weird ancient make slung at his side, or sits on the very tail of his ass, knife in one hand, bread and sausage in the other. More rarely an *hidalgo* passes on a fine horse and his bearing is so noble, his air so proud and courteous, his salutation so charming that one thinks of him of the "Gaban

Verde" in "Don Quixote." Across the wide plains of heather and dwarf-palm stretching dull-green and brown to the horizon, and solitary but for the scattered herds of jet-black, white-horned cattle grazing, a mounted herdsman, silent, erect, wrapped in his cloak, approaches the road, crosses it and becomes a mere speck again in the *dehesa*. In early spring the wind blows icily even in Andalucía. It whirls the pink and white petals of almond blossom roughly across the dusty road and freezes the oranges that hang golden in the sunny valleys. In the great court and kitchen of the inn a circle forms round the *candela* of logs and twigs, vine and olive prunings, sweet-scented rosemary and whin and cistus, blazing amid mounds of wood-ash. As a fresh log is thrown on the smoke whirls round the group of peasants, half concealing them from view. A woman in black busies herself over sundry earthenware pots placed round the fire. Near the village gleam the red shawls and shirts of women at work among the olives.

On the high road from Ronda the subtle icy wind blows silently; for the cork-woods have disappeared, and not a tree or shrub breaks its piercing violence. Only from time to time against immense ridges of bare grey rock above the road it sings and hisses with a sound of mountain torrents. Some twelve miles from Ronda lies Las Cuevas del Becerro, a grey-and-white village of low, one-storied houses. In February it is a village of many waterfalls; they pour in linked cataracts

of foam from the hills at the back of the village to the stream below, and everywhere is the sound of rushing water. On the outskirts of the village cluster a few olives, and some lines of almonds are in pink-and-white flower. Beyond, the sun shines in windy gleams on the softly-swelling hills of green and brown and the more distant hills of delicate grey-blue.

The road is deserted, given up to the dust and the wind. For a distance of ten kilometres one will meet but a single cart, drawn by three mules, a peasant on a donkey, only his eyes appearing between his felt hat and the plaid folded closely about his face, and a shivering boy with a flock of sheep, his dress a medley of rust colour and grey and brown. On the hill-side another boy-shepherd stands frozen, motionless, wrapped in his black plaid, with the sheep huddled round him, vainly seeking shelter. Seven miles from Las Cuevas a track to the left leads across the undulating fields to Teba. Teba, though perched high on a bare, grey hill, is still invisible. As the sun sets the hills and hollows of green cornfields and patches of ploughed land take a softer look as though fresh-moulded by the wind, and the wind sinks after having driven the clouds from the sky and caged them in white masses behind the mountain ranges on the horizon. Groups of peasants returning in a long procession from far across the fields are now lost from sight in the hollows, now silhouetted in the level evening light as they cross a rise of ground, their forks and

*azadones* clear against the sky. They have five kilometres or more of difficult going, now over rough stony paths, now sinking deep in earth, before they reach their homes after a long day's toil. Above, on a mass of grey rock, stands a grey ruined castle.

An old shepherd, resting for a moment after a stretch of steep rocky path, explains that it is a tower of the Moors, belonging to the Counts of Teba. And pointing across the waving plain of chequered green and brown that stretches below for miles without tree or hedge, he informs the stranger that all, as far as the eye can reach, is the property of the Condesa de Teba. He had never seen her, for once, when she was at Ronda, intending to visit Teba, she received news of her son's death, "killed by I know not who." "Her husband was Napoleon." But to the peasants of Teba she can never be anything but the Countess of Teba: they care nothing for Emperors and are by no means of opinion that the Order of the Garter could *relever* Teba. Suddenly, when the journey up and down rocky hill-sides is beginning to seem not only a rough but an interminable pilgrimage, the village appears whiter than snow round a corner of grey rock. The houses of its long, straight streets are whitewashed from eave to foot; it is the whitest of the white villages of Andalucía. The only interruptions in the glow of white are the dark projecting iron screens (*rejas*) of the upper and lower windows; the thick ledges above them are all white-

washed, so that they seem to be inches deep in snow.

In the failing light single electric lamps, with no protecting shades, gleam along the streets, and the first stars glitter in the frosty sky. The *Plaza* is a square of houses radiantly white, and in the pleasant clean inn a few strangers sit round the bright wood fire of the immense kitchen—a tax-collector, a traveller in wines, and an old man who has come up to the village with a mule-load of oranges. To the west a road goes steeply down through masses of grey rock on either side, and from below travellers by train have a momentary picturesque view of the old castle, clear-cut on the sky, and of a few houses of Teba ; but none stops to pay it a visit, and, indeed, there is little to be seen there.

“ We are not from Teba nor Murcia,” says Rincon disdainfully in Cervantes’ “ Rinconete y Cortadillo.” Yet Teba visited leaves a pleasant, strongly individual impression, a memory of bright cleanliness and simple hospitality and glistening white houses under the stars.

## II

### IN OLD AND NEW CASTILLE

! O tierra en que nací, noble y sencilla,  
O campos de Castilla ;  
Donde corrió mi infancia, aire sereno,  
Fecundadora luz !

NÚÑEZ DE ARCE.

#### BURGOS

**O**F all Spanish cities Burgos is, if not the best known, at least that known superficially to the greatest number of foreigners. Even those who do not stop there have a vision in passing of the mighty towers of the cathedral dominating the city. Those who visit the cathedral and the Carthusian monastery of Miraflores and the Cistercian convent of Las Huelgas have their first idea of the grandeur and artistic wealth of Spain. They may also find themselves transported from spring to winter, since the spring climate of Burgos is somewhat harsh, and they perhaps ever afterwards retain this first unfair impression of the climate of Spain. In the middle of the night they may be awakened by a loud shout in the silence, the thud of an iron pike on the pavement, the sound of voices, the jangling of keys, and then the slamming of a

massive street door, after which the silence again reigns unbroken. It all seems sinister and startling. What has really happened is that a peaceful citizen has come home from his *café*, has called the night watchman, the *sereno*, to open the door for him, and has gone to bed ; but the foreign traveller, with his head full of the romantic legend of Spain, imagines at least that that grim door slamming has closed on the lifeless body of a rival lover, or on some incarcerated victim of the Inquisition. Burgos holds the mind by many memories of the Cid. The earliest great poem in the Spanish language, written nearly eight hundred years ago, the "Poema de mio Cid," opens with the entry of the exiled Cid into Burgos :

Mio Cid Ruy Diaz por Burgos entró,  
 En su compañía sesenta pendones,  
 Exien lo veer mugeres e varones,  
 Burgeses e burgesas por las finiestras son,  
 Plorando de los ojos, tanto avien dolor ;  
 De las sus bocas todos dizian una rason :  
 " Dios, qué buen vasallo si oviesse buen señor ! " (ll. 15-20.)

(My Cid Ruy Diaz entered into Burgos,  
 In his company [went] sixty banners,  
 Men and women went out to see him,  
 Citizens and their wives stand at the windows,  
 Tears run from their eyes, so great was their sorrow,  
 And the lips of all said the same sentence :  
 " God, how good a vassal had he but a good lord ! ")

For Burgos was the Cid's birthplace, and was proud of its great son. On the wall of Burgos Cathedral still hangs an ancient coffer, which tradition affirms to be one of those filled with sand to deceive the



Jews Raquel and Vidas. Near Burgos is the old Benedictine convent of San Pedro de Cardeña, where the Cid took leave of his wife Doña Ximena :

Agora nos partimos, Dios sabe el ajuntar !

In this twelfth-century poem of the Cid, in its hero, in the austere yet hospitable city of Burgos, one is introduced to that strength of character and noble aloofness which have made and kept Spain Spain. After 822 years the bones of Spain's national hero, Ruy Diaz de Vivar, "he who was born in happy hour," the Cid Campeador, were laid in what is likely to be their final resting-place under the transept in Burgos Cathedral. The remains, with those of the Cid's wife, Doña Ximena, were carried in solemn procession from the town hall, King Alfonso XIII walked behind the coffin, and in the presence of the King and Queen it was lowered into its place by the Infante Fernando, the Minister of Education, the Duke of Infantado, among whose titles is that of Conde de Vivar, and the Mayors of Burgos and Valencia, Valencia del Cid, which the Cid conquered and where he died in 1099. A salute of fifteen guns was fired. The epitaph, composed by the eminent scholar Don Ramón Menéndez Pidal, runs : "Rodericus Didaci Campidoctor MXCIX. anno Valentiae mortuus," Campidoctor being the eleventh-century Latin form of Campeador. In thus honouring the Cid King Alfonso showed once more how completely he is identified with the Spanish nation. A well-known

Spanish writer in the nineteenth century said that it was high time to bury the Cid and forget him, but one cannot so dispose of a national tradition. The Cid is immortal. "Long live the dead Cid!" as the Archbishop of Burgos, Cardinal Benlloch, said at this ceremony. Strange indeed is the history of the Cid's body after death. Strapped to the saddle of his good steed Babieca, it won a posthumous victory over the Moors and rode from Valencia across Spain to San Pedro de Cardeña, where it was buried. In 1272 King Alfonso X built it a new tomb there; in the fifteenth and again in the sixteenth century it was removed to a new site in the church, but on the latter occasion the Emperor Charles V intervened and ordered it to be replaced. For three centuries it then remained undisturbed, but in 1809 it was transferred by the French General Thiebault to Burgos, and since 1842 had lain in the town hall. The splendid ceremony at Burgos on July 21, 1921, was thus of great historic interest. The Cid who now lives in the hearts of the Spanish people is not strictly the Cid of history. As the late Henry Butler Clarke wrote in his work on "The Cid Campeador," the Cid is a name round which the Spaniards have grouped the qualities they most admire rather than an actual person who possessed these qualities; his legend is not the conscious creation of one mind, but a successive growth, in which may be traced from the twelfth to the seventeenth century the evolution of a popular ideal. The "Poema del Cid," written about half a century

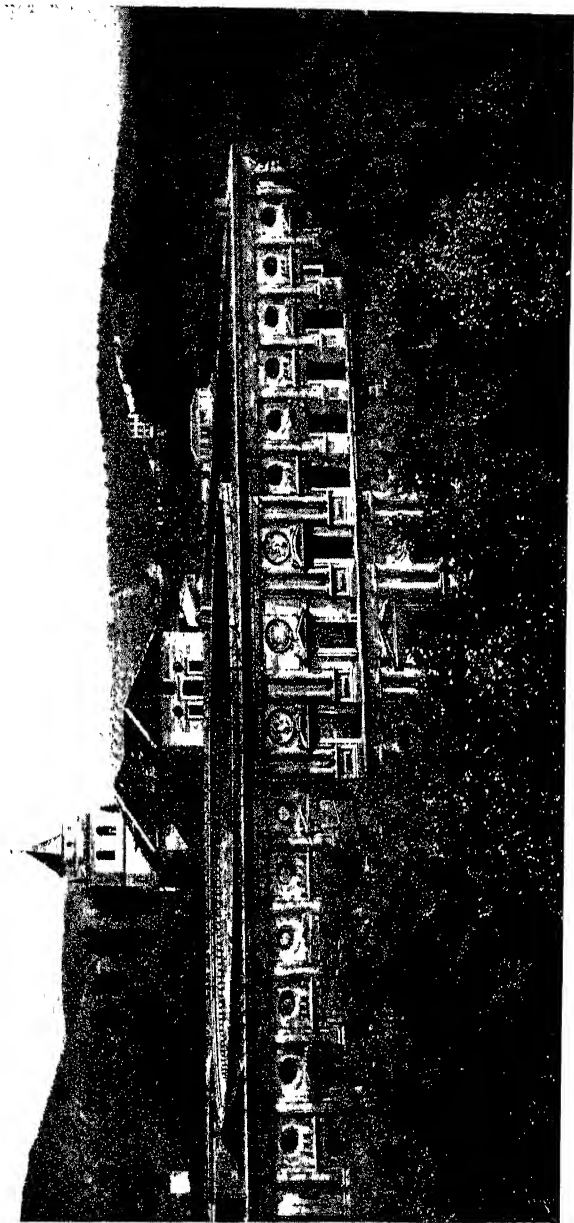
after its hero's death, is in its grandeur and rugged simplicity as untranslatable as Homer, but is beloved by all who love good literature.

#### VILLA POR VILLA, VALLADOLID EN CASTILLA

Valladolid has not the compelling attraction of Burgos or Toledo, Segovia or Avila. It is of course much larger than they are and has an important life quite unconnected with the sightseeing of travellers. Yet at almost every step in Valladolid one comes upon some historic site or some building of great beauty or artistic interest. Nothing now remains of the cells of the Inquisition where the unfortunate Archbishop of Toledo, Bartolomé de Carranza, was imprisoned so closely that he knew nothing of a fire which destroyed four hundred houses in the city, and wrote to King Philip II that everything seemed to have been done with a view to assure his death; and where Fray Luis de Leon was imprisoned for nearly five years and composed some of his best known works. The street, formerly called Calle del Obispo, now bears his name. Valladolid was the capital and court of Spain until 1560, and here in 1559 two great *autos-de-fé* were held, one on the King's birthday, at which Cano preached and the Protestant Cazalla was burnt, another in October, in the presence of the King. It was on this occasion that Don Carlos de Seso, as he passed the royal stand, protested against his treatment as from one gentleman to another, and received from the King the celebrated answer that were his own

son a heretic he would himself carry the fagots for his burning. Valladolid indeed figures prominently but sadly in history. Columbus died here heart-broken in 1506, and Cervantes exactly a century later lived and suffered in a house which is still preserved, and is the best possible monument to Cervantes, standing back as it does from the tall modern houses of the same street and faced by a little square of flowers and a hedge of glowing pink, red, and white oleanders. He had but the row of four narrow rooms from front to back of the house, but the small kitchen has a great chimney, a *campana*, under which a whole family might warm themselves sitting on the side benches of a winter evening. It was to the smallest of these rooms that the murdered Gaspar de Ezpeleta was carried up from the dark street on a June night in 1605, a fact which led to the arrest of Cervantes. Another historical event still remembered at Valladolid is that of the execution in the little Plaza del Ochoavo (now hemmed in by tall houses) of King Juan II's favourite, Don Alvaro de Luna, of which an early chronicler gives so pathetic an account. At Valladolid the Catholic Kings were married, at Valladolid (greatest of all her tragedies to those who often in ignorance dislike the *rey papelero*) Philip the Prudent was born. In the long low palace of the Plaza de San Pablo one may still admire the sculptured corner window of the room in which he was born, and on another side one of the *rejas* has a chain attached to it, by which it can be opened

(a window-*reja* which can open is a contradiction in words) for the baby prince to be carried out and baptized in the Church of San Pablo opposite. Lovers of the Plateresque style—and who that cares at all for beautiful things can fail to appreciate it, if not as architecture, as a kind of lacework, of wonderful ornament in stone?—will find no examples of it more sumptuously magnificent than the fronts of the Church of San Pablo and the College of San Gregorio. This Dominican College was founded in 1488 by Alonso de Burgos, Bishop of Cordoba and Cuenca and Palencia, and in the first half of the sixteenth century some of the most eminent Spaniards studied or taught there: Vitoria, Cano, Carranza, Fray Luis de Granada. Its inner *patio* is equally rich in sculpture: cardinals' hats and fleurs-de-lis are everywhere, scarcely an inch is left unsculptured, and the severe frieze of the sheaves of the Catholic Kings above is a relief. The broad upper gallery is full of sky, a delightful shelter from the wind and a sunbath in winter; only on one side does the tower of the Church of San Pablo rise above it. Another Plateresque building is the former College of Santa Cruz, now a museum containing marvellous polychrome wooden statues, marvellous in their variety and life and beauty, chiefly the work of the Galician Gregorio Hernandez and of Berruguete, and the splendid choir-stalls from the Church of San Benito. Near it is the University, now restored and flourishing, with several thousand students. But Valladolid has many other artistic treasures.



GRANADA

THE ALHAMBRA—THE PALACE OF CHARLES V, SHOWING THE RANGE OF THE SIERRA NEVADA



One turns with a certain relief from the riot of sculpture in San Pablo, and the College of St. Gregory to the thirteenth-century Church of San Martin, to beautiful Romanesque Santa María la Antigua, to the altar by Matsys in San Salvador, or to the lovely Renaissance *patio* of the Casa de Fabio Nelli, with beautifully sculptured capitals round three sides, one of the sides half hidden by acacias. The massive Herrera-Churriguerra Cathedral has an exquisite Arfe monstrance, wrought by Juan (grandson of the original Arphe), whose other masterpieces are at Santiago, Seville, and Avila. Some of Valladolid's streets are very attractive owing to the high and broad arcades, over which the houses rest on tall round granite pillars. It is a way of building which should be imitated in any very hot or very rainy climate.

### LEON

Leon, seven or eight centuries ago one of the most important capitals in Europe, now lies forgotten and remote, a little city of narrow, irregular streets about its Cathedral, its Collegiate Church of San Isidro, with a truly royal crypt, and the beautiful Convent of San Marcos, where Quevedo was imprisoned. The Cathedral of Leon has not the gloom and grandeur, the magnificence, the soaring austerity of the cathedrals of Burgos, Seville, and Toledo, but it is a delicate flower of architecture, a flower petrified, a thing so frail and lovely in the airy lightness of its traceried windows that one is half afraid that it will fall suddenly with a shiver of



breaking glass or fade noiselessly away like a fairy dream. Except when one is actually looking at it one is never quite sure that it exists, one would like to return to Leon to make certain that it was no fancied vision. At certain hours the sun lights its sides of old stained glass, window after window, into living hymns of praise: they flash and glow with an indescribable splendour above the dark walnut choir-stalls and iron screens. All their colours, red, orange, blue, purple, brown, are thus intensified for a space till the sun leaves them, even as the incense gleams freshly in its censer when swung vigorously by a red-cassocked acolyte in the aisle below. Those who prefer limitless aspiration to the loveliness of perfection and strength to gracefulness may be disappointed in Leon Cathedral, which presents no rugged masses and no mystery, filling one merely with amazement that a thing so flower-like should have been fashioned in stone and be so permanent. It is as it were Gothic architecture become classical by reason of its definite clearness and finished harmony of proportions. The city is so small that in a few minutes' walk one may be out in the fields, green country of streams and meadows and hedges such as surrounds few other Castilian cities, with an unimpeded view of the Cathedral in its marvellous slender grace of windows. Leon is not lifeless, for it has importance, a growing importance, as an agricultural town; one may note that it possesses no bull-ring. The peasants, peasants of ancient dress—faded blues and browns—noble features,

dignified speech and courteous manners, troop into market from the the surrounding villages. Leon's modern houses are built of brick, but here and there in the rough cobbled streets one may come upon a massive ancient building, some old closed sculptured *palacio* or houses of stone with little iron balconies filled in summer with geraniums and having green blinds to the windows above them. Or the houses project on wooden posts forming rough arcades, those delightful arcades so familiar in the towns of Castille. And there are little squares with acacias and a fountain, and dark-brown earthenware water-jars standing along the fountain's edge while the girls wait their turn to fill them. A baker passes with his donkey, its panniers brimming with loaves, or he is perched on its tail behind the great panniers ("bread-baskets"), having sold all his bread. An old man passes with a basket of plums calling slowly at long intervals and without any hint in his voice of an invitation to buy: "¡Qué buenas ciruelas!" Beggars and priests and soldiers pass, until at midday the city settles into the silence of the afternoon siesta. Leon has altered since Enrique de Arfe the goldsmith lived and worked there four centuries ago, but it has succeeded in preserving much of its dreamy peace and ancient charm.

### SALAMANCA

The bells of the Cathedral ring out in the cloudless sky, and their joyful clamour is taken up by those of the little Church of San Martín as the proces-

sion, its bright colours gleaming along the massive buildings of golden brown stone, passes out of the Cathedral and down the narrow street and round the densely thronged Plaza Mayor. First come mounted soldiers, then a bugler, a priest in white cope carrying a cross, the empty sepulchre with a figure of Christ and along each side four angels—*Laudate pueri, surrexit Ille*—then more soldiers, infantry with fixed bayonets, the Virgin crowned and robed in white and gold, beadles and other officials, officers, and, closing the procession, two lines of cavalry. In the Cathedral, as the procession returns, the Virgin and Christ on either side of the high altar—their bearers completely hidden by the crowd—are seen to bow slightly to one another several times. The Bishop preaches to the text, “Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord” and says, “Here too the stones speak: *aquí tambien hablan las piedras.*” Where else indeed should the stones speak if not at Salamanca, the ancient University city that is full of ghosts? Learned Bishop Cámara, who spoke the words on that Easter Sunday, Pascua de Resurrección, is long since added to their number. And the stones, “moulded by music and the voice of man,” still speak from the lovely old walls and towers built with ducats from the new world which Columbus, who once trod these streets, “gave to Castille and Leon.” In these streets, now so silent, one seems still to catch sight of Fray Luis de Leon disappearing round a corner of massive stonework as he hurries

from the lecture-room to his convent, or the famous old Dominican, Fray Francisco de Vitoria, passes as, maimed with gout, he is carried in a litter to the Schools. Domingo de Soto and Melchor Cano ride out on their mules from the great Convent of San Esteban on their way to the Council of Trent. Here San Ignacio de Loyola had to endure the suspicions of the Dominicans, and Columbus, after being rebuffed, was encouraged by Fray Diego de Deza, to the great subsequent satisfaction of the Order. The favour of the Dominicans must be wooed at Salamanca also by Santa Teresa, to whose charm even surly Fray Bartolomé de Medina partially succumbed. In the sixteenth century 8,000 students enlivened the streets of the little town, and the poorer among them suffered and made others suffer as Quevedo's Pablo, el Buscon. Many of the students displayed a most serious zeal for learning and the real children were rather the professors, whose mutual rivalries and dislikes knew no bounds. Charles V, when he visited Salamanca, attended eight lectures in a single morning so as not to hurt the feelings of any of the principal professors. In the Cathedral, the new Cathedral begun thirty years previously, the young Philip II, son of a Portuguese mother, was married in 1543 to a Portuguese princess. At Salamanca Santa Teresa founded one of her convents in 1571, ten years after the foundation of her first convent in her native Avila. The low solid house of great blocks of brown stone, with two coats of arms above

the massive rounded doorway still stands as it was when she arrived and found students in possession difficult to dislodge and spent the night in the bare haunted room, to the terror of her companion, as the saint records with quaint humour.<sup>1</sup> Even part of the wooden staircase is preserved intact, going up from a little court with *soportales*, rough beams supported on round pillars. Twelve nuns—*siervas de San José*—now live in the house, devoting themselves to the care of poor children. Happily many other ancient buildings of Salamanca remain. Travellers in a hurry often leave it unvisited, and they are wise to prefer Avila and Segovia, the wonderful beauty of which is more easily seen in a few hours. Salamanca requires really a week's quiet sojourn in order fully to appreciate its charm. One must see it under the rosy and golden sky of a summer dawn, when the sun throws its first radiance along the ancient walls, and on a night of full moon, when every detail of its plateresque sculpture is distinct and exquisite, every detail of the beautiful façade of Sancti Spiritus, the palace of Monterey, the dark church of the Ursulas, the sculptured front of the Casa de las Muertes (House of Deaths), the Calle del Palomo, quaintly picturesque, the square tower of San José standing sentinel over the silent streets, the lovely windows-*rejas* of the Casa de las Conchas casting their graceful shadows over the sculptured scallop shells of its walls: *Ave Maria gratia plena*. One must see Salamanca also frozen

<sup>1</sup> "Libro de las Fundaciones," cap. xix.

beneath the hard cloudless winter sky as well as basking under the wonderful glowing turquoise sky of summer ; above all one must see it in a cloudless sunset when the last sunlight casts an even mellow hue upon the brown-golden stone-work. After Oxford Salamanca is the most beautiful university town in Europe. It is built of a sandstone which is originally soft and pale, almost white, but which hardens and darkens to a mellow gold brown. There are whole streets of walls of this exquisite weather-coloured stone in great hewn blocks, relieved perhaps by slender iron balconies, in which in late summer hydrangeas, fuchsias, geraniums, oleander, and convolvulus have taken the place of the earlier "claveles." It is this subdued glow of golden-brown that makes Salamanca a jewel of great price, apart from the sculptured plateresque details of its wonderful buildings and the many memories of its past. In the town itself there is plenty of colour, although it is rarely very bright and often of tints most delicately matched. Gay flowers poking their heads through iron *rejas*, carefully tended and bountifully watered squares of flowers, charcoal-sellers in black and dull intense blue jogging through the white dust along the Roman bridge, fine black oxen plodding steadily through the streets, a mule with fringed plaid of white, green and black, a melon-seller carrying *alforjas* (saddle-bags) bursting with green melons, the *charro* costume, all velvet and silver buttons, of the peasants from the hills. Every touch of colour stands out against those massive

walls which themselves have an abundance and intensity, but no variety, of colour. Although thousands of students no longer bring disquiet to the citizens of Salamanca, there is plenty of life in the place. The heart of the city is the beautifully proportioned Plaza Mayor, a square entirely surrounded by houses. Into it wheeled traffic penetrates but seldom, and with many a jolt and jerk, through arches. The buildings are of uniform height, all of brown Salamanca stone and tiled roofs of dark brown, with three storeys of regular windows, each with its green blind and iron balcony, and they form arcades all round the flowered square, with shops and *cafés* under the arcades. Under these arcades on festive days the people walk round and round, in two streams, the one of men, the other of women. The two streams never pause nor stop, so that conversations between the two are desultory, by fragments, as they pass. Despite the destruction of man and time—and in view of the havoc wrought here in the Peninsular War man must come first—Salamanca has succeeded in retaining much of her past beauty, and some of the names surviving are delightfully indigenous, as the Calle del Silencio (Street of Silence) or the Parador del Clavel (Inn of the Carnation).<sup>1</sup> Of the

<sup>1</sup> A little *Guia de Salamanca* published in 1868 gives the names of the inns then existing as de los Javalles (of the Wild Boars), de los Caballeros (of the Knights), de la Paloma (of the Dove), de la Reina, de la Bola, de la Cadena, de las Tablas, del Manco, del Ojaranco, del Vizcaino; besides the Fondas de los Toros, del Rincon, de la Burgalesa, de la Vizcaina and de las Diligencias.

town as a whole the most magnificent view is at sunset from the new bridge and the road on the other side of the Tormes. The cathedral is outlined in every minutest detail of its splendid towers, the turrets and pinnacles, even the finials and crockets sharply etched on the cloudless luminous western sky of molten silver and gold. The Roman bridge too is seen in the full beauty of its many massive low arches; beyond it the river flows dull-green and placid beneath the glossy grey-green of willows and elms. Nearer stands a clump of poplars, and the line of the city, studded with electric lamps, and the superb mass of the cathedral, taking a tinge almost of dark purple in the afterglow, are reflected in the river. Presently, perhaps, the whole city's clear reflection is dispelled and shattered by a couple of mules brought down to bathe. The simple plan which thus disturbs the dreaming towers is for a man to stand on the bridge above and guide the mules by a rope into deep water. Having lost the reflection, let us grasp the reality, and, still at sunset, climb the tower of the New Cathedral by a dark winding staircase of steep and difficult steps. Immediately below lie the squares formed by courts and convents and a sea of dark-brown tiled roofs which match admirably with the colour of the walls in the last sunshine. The deep *patio* of the University, the old General or Escuelas Mayores (formerly the upper gallery of this court had but one side, that of the magnificent *artesonado* ceiling and the beautiful iron *reja* opening into the famous library, where



excommunication awaited students who went to steal books rather than to study) ; beyond it, equally distinct, is the court of the Escuelas Menores, with the statue of Fray Luis de Leon. Not far away is the great building of the Colegio Trilingüe, now a barracks, and, on the other side, the Colegio del Arzobispo (" hoy de los nobles Yrlandeses "), a fine building with a noble front and pillared *patio*, to which the Irish college was transferred from Valladolid in 1582, and where twenty-six Irish still find hospitable shelter. From another side of the cathedral tower one has a glimpse of the beautiful court of the Dueñas Convent, the only possible view, since visitors are not admitted. The Tormes gleams in lines and curves of purest silver, and, beyond, the plain of brown and purple stretches away into the sunset on the one side and on the other to the distant blue mountain-ranges, the Peña de Francia, the Sierra de Bejar, the Sierra de Gredos, the Sierra de Avila. Scarcely a town or village is to be plainly distinguished, occasionally a church tower or, equally rare, a clump of trees, shows along the roads, the white roads over which Santa Teresa journeyed so painfully in jolting carts, and men on mules brought or failed to bring supplies for starving students and grave monks rode slowly away on important missions and Lazarillo guided his blind master step by step in the glaring sunshine. Seen from near at hand, the country round Salamanca does not belie this " spacious and sad " impression in late summer (for in spring the green fields of

wheat everywhere give it a totally different look) : little brown square-towered churches in the centre of small colourless villages in cornland, here and there a line of poplars, a plot of vines or a clump of pines, which in the morning light stand out like living emeralds from the baked earthenware plain ; or a great flock of black and white sheep huddled together form a curious chess-board in the stubblefields.

The celebrated Augustinian convent has now vanished without a trace, as has the house possessed by the convent, the country-house of La Flecha five miles away, at the edge of the Tormes. Its garden, however, remains, where Luis de Leon dreamed and studied and wrote, as he looked across to the beautiful curve of the river or to the cathedral towers of Salamanca above the invisible city. Salamanca now has a convent of Augustinian nuns, which contains some of Ribera's noblest pictures, and a few Augustinians live in the ancient Colegio de Calatrava, beyond the convent of their old enemies the Dominicans. This famous Convent of San Esteban still flourishes, as it did before the Augustinian Convent at Salamanca was built. It now has sixty or seventy monks. They have noble cloisters and a large piece of ground outside the convent, where in summer, having doffed their outer capes of black, one may see them walking up and down or reading solitarily, like white *mercenarios*. Here memories of great men come crowding on the mind. A lecture-room, that of theology, is called after Fray Melchor Cano. In a long corridor a cell is

pointed out as having formerly belonged to Fray Diego de Deza. At the end of a dark and narrow hall of great length an inscription above a small door records that through this door Christopher Columbus sought protection : " Por esta puerta entró el desvalido Colón el año de 1484." It sounds as if he had only to enter in order to find peace and protection, but it was not made as easy for him as all that. The Dominicans were not famed for their love of new things, as Loyola found to his cost. At the foot of a staircase leading from one of the beautiful cloisters a plain slab of granite without inscription marks the tomb of the famous Dominican Fray Domingo de Soto, who died too young in 1560 (one who had been his pupil and who was to be a great opponent of the Dominicans, Fray Luis de Leon, delivered his funeral oration), not however before, at Salamanca and at Trent, he had earned a world-wide reputation for wisdom and learning. " Qui scit Sotum scit totum," the saying went, and he was soon ranked with Cano, among the great masters of scholastic theology, into which he had poured a new life. Above the staircase is an inscription and his coat of arms : two hands joined and a flame rising from them. The convent has an even more beautiful earlier cloister, singularly attractive by reason of its simplicity, the peculiar and original shape of the arches between the columns and the delicacy of the plateresque sculpture, here combining grace with a certain Dominican austerity. Its library, well supplied with modern books, is an ideal place for

study and is full of light and air, with a fine view of the buildings of the city towards the cathedral, and of the plain beyond, famous in literature and history. It was going out of Salamanca by the Roman bridge that Lazarillo was initiated into the mysterious ways of the world and the hardships of his profession. The blind man his master had assured his mother that he received him rather as a son than as a servant. A few days later, says Lazarillo: "We left Salamanca and when we arrived at the bridge and at its entrance came to an animal of stone which has almost the form of a bull [one of the famous 'toros de Guisando'], the blind man bade me go up to it and when I had done so he said: 'Lazaro, place your ear close to this bull and you will hear a great noise inside it.' In my simplicity I did as he told me, thinking it was so, and when he perceived that I had my head up against the stone, with a strong hand he gave me such a blow against the devil of a bull that the pain of its horns in my head lasted three days and more. And he said: 'Fool, learn that the blind man's guide must know a little more than the devil himself,' and laughed heartily over his practical joke."

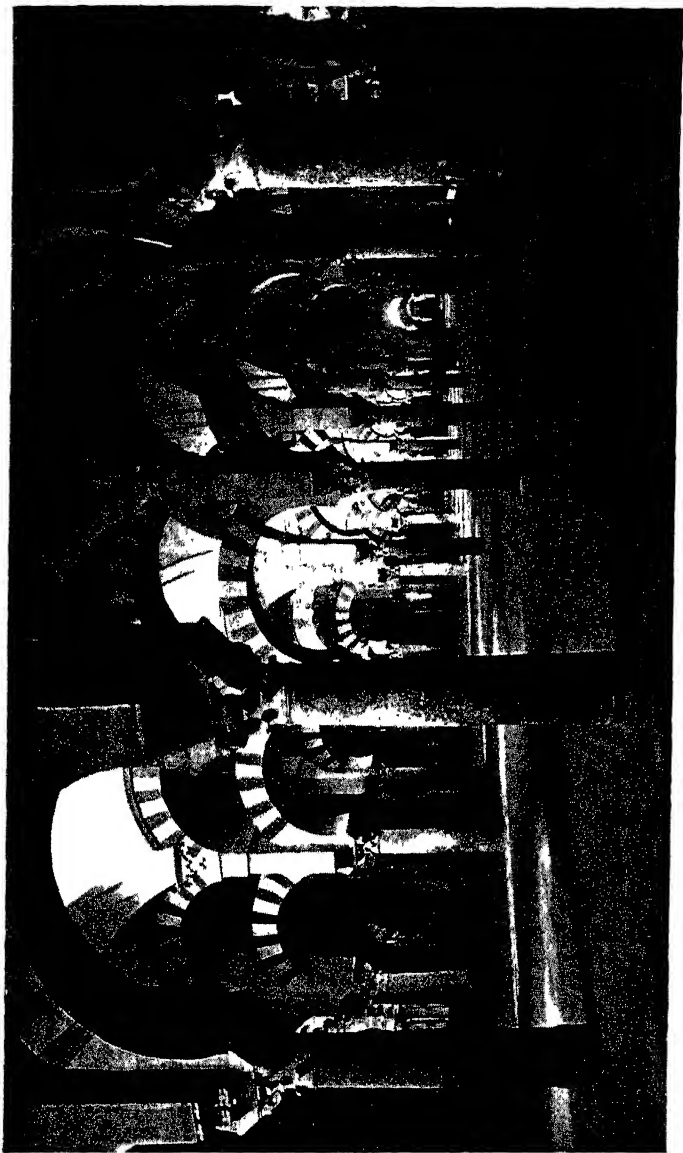
It was on the way from Salamanca that Lazarillo, thus awakened, drank the wine out of his master's jealously guarded *jarrillo* through a straw. (The British Museum—MSS. 10 E. iv.—has a drawing of a blind man's boy sucking drink through a straw.) It was in a village near Salamanca that the same blind man in time of vintage, having maltreated

Lazarillo all the morning, determined to share a bunch of grapes with him. They were to eat them grape and grape about, but, the blind man having soon begun to eat them two by two, Lazarillo parried by devouring them three by three. When the bunch was finished, "Lazaro," said his master, "you have deceived me, I could swear that you ate the grapes three by three." "I did not," answered the boy; "but why do you suspect me?" And the sagacious old man answered: "Do you know how I see that you ate them three by three? Because I was eating them two by two and you said nothing." Surely that is better than much abstruse philosophy, and it is such wisdom that pervades Castilian literature and may be found among the Castilian peasantry to-day.

#### LA CELESTINA

There is a picturesque succession of streets of poor houses as one goes down to the river a little to the right of the Roman bridge, houses acumbrle in dust and rubbish, with many dogs and children, hovels roughly built on the slope above the river. And there is a passage in *La Celestina* (or the *Tragicomedia de Calisto y Melibea*) which seems to fit the place exactly: "On the outskirts of the city, on the hill that goes down to the river near the tanneries, this good lady has an isolated house half ruinous and poor."<sup>1</sup> And tradition has placed the scene of

<sup>1</sup> Act i. Cf. "a la cuesta del río, cerca de las tenerías" (*ibid.*); "en las tenerías, a la cuesta del río" (Act iv.); "a las tenerías, cabe el río" (*ibid.*)



CORDOVA  
THE CATHEDRAL—A GLIMPSE OF SOME OF THE EIGHT HUNDRED AND FIFTY COLUMNS



Rojas' wonderful drama in the old university town.<sup>1</sup> Clearly the city of *La Celestina* is a Castilian city, a cathedral city of much *clerecía*, and many convents; it has churches of San Miguel and La Magdalena, and a Calle del Vicario Gordo. In the early morning peasants go out to work in the fields and herdsmen bring in their flocks to be milked. Valladolid has churches of La Magdalena (although the present building is of the sixteenth century) and San Miguel, and one of the streets by the river is still named Calle de las Tenerías. That the scene is not placed in the capital and court, as Valladolid was until 1560, is, however, evident from the incidental reference to the visit of the French Ambassador: "When the French Ambassador came here." This would suit Salamanca, where such a visit would be a rare event to be remembered. Both Salamanca and Toledo have the churches and tanneries (readers of "Don Quixote" will remember that "they cannot speak so well who are brought up in the Zocodover and the tanneries as those who spend their time walking up and down the cloister of the cathedral"); as to the Calle del Vicario Gordo in the poor quarter by the river, the name has disappeared if it ever existed: such popular names were of course far more frequent in the sixteenth century, as for instance at Salamanca the streets de los Novios, de Pero Cojo, de Raspagatos, de Abraça moças, de los Moros. As to the total absence of students from *La Celestina*, the prosperity of the University

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Menéndez y Pelayo, "Orígenes de la Novela," t. III., pp. xxxix.-xlii.



dated from the last years of the Catholic Kings ; in 1546, the earliest date of its matriculation books, the number of students was 5,150 ; twenty years later it reached its high water mark with 7,832, and one may legitimately suppose that the increase in the previous twenty years from 1526 to 1546, the years of Vitoria's professorship, had been at least equally rapid. It must be admitted that it is a notable omission, explained perhaps by the fact that the author did not wish to confuse the issues and deliberately cut out the students as deserving a literary work to themselves. On the whole the reader has become fairly content to accept Salamanca as the background to the drama, when he is pulled up short a few pages before the end by Melibea's announcement that she is going up to a roof-top to enjoy " the delightful sight of the ships." Ships in Castille ! Valladolid is the Castilian city most closely in touch with the Atlantic, but it is the tributary Pisuerga not the Duero which actually passes the city (there is a saying that the Pisuerga has the water and the Duero the credit ; the Spaniards in England in the middle of the sixteenth century said that the English drank more beer than the Pisuerga contained water). Schemes to make the Tagus navigable as far as Toledo have lain dormant for centuries and are likely to be solved by aeroplane, and the " ships " visible from one of Toledo's houses could only be the boats of a festival such as that described by Tirso de Molina in his " Cigarrales de Toledo " (1624) : they included an imitation eight-

oared *galera* and a Portuguese *caravela*. As to Salamanca no ships of any kind attempt to pass beneath the arches of the Roman bridge. Thus the reader is suddenly in a great perplexity. Shall he have recourse to drastic emendation and substitute gardens, *huertos*? The alteration required is very small: *nauios, uertos*. But there is no need. The simpler explanation is that the author, having accurately, too accurately, described his scene, purposely interpolated the ships. One can imagine him meeting a portly canon in the streets of Salamanca and being accused of having calumniated the local *clerecía*, and his answer, "How can that be? Who ever saw ships in Castille?" On these conditions it is possible to accept the Salamanca tradition, although M. Foulché-Delbosc strongly favours Toledo. Of the five towns or villages from which wines come to the city, Toro, Madrigal, and San Martin are in favour of Salamanca, Luque is further afield, and the fifth, Monviedro or Morviedro or Sagunto, is further afield still on the shore of the Mediterranean. Clearly, however, the whole atmosphere of the drama is Castilian, and has nothing to do with Valencia on the Mediterranean, or rather on the Turia or Guadalaviar, nor with Seville and the ships of the Guadalquivir.

#### CANTALAPIEDRA AND MADRIGAL

Cantalapiedra, unknown to fame except as the birthplace of the unfortunate Martin Martinez, Professor at Salamanca in the second half of the

sixteenth century, is an agricultural town of a little over 600 householders (*vecinos*), about 2,700 inhabitants. It owns about a league of treeless wheatland all round it, a total of 19,000 *obradas*,<sup>1</sup> although until the recent survey it was paying taxes on only 14,000. It has two casinos and two inns, the principal of which, the Posada de los Caballeros (the Inn of the Knights), is beautifully clean, as indeed are most of the inns and houses of Castille, and as primitive as it is clean. It has been kept by the same woman for over fifty years, and she receives her guests with a courtliness which makes them feel that she is attending to them not for money but because they happen to be in her house. She will even, if they have neglected to bring provisions with them, make some attempt to provide them with a dinner as well as cook it. The little earthenware pots stand simmering half buried in a mound of ashes. The entrance of the inn is a covered court of cobbles, and large sieves are hung all round the walls. This leads on one side to a long stable with mangers for many mules and horses, and on another to the kitchen and court and garden of fruit trees and a great vine.

<sup>1</sup>The *obrada* has 400 *estadales* and each *estadal* =  $12\frac{1}{2}$  *pies* (feet). It is what a man can plough in one day and varies: in the province of Segovia it is under 100 acres, in that of Palencia over 125. Round Cantalapedra it is the measure for cornland; that for vines, rare in these parts, is the *alanzada* (= *aranzada* from *arar*, "to plough"). Each *alanzada* here has 400 vinestocks (*cepas*), but, like the *obrada*, its size varies in different parts of the country. In the province of Segovia properties are fairly small, in that of Toledo they are much larger.

A few small bedrooms, with fireplace, chairs all round the walls and a few pictures of Saints or the Virgin, are also on the ground floor. (There is really but one floor in many of these village houses.<sup>1</sup>) The inn thus occupies a large area although it has better accommodation for the mounts of the knights than for the knights themselves. In July and August Cantalapiedra is entirely given up to the wheat harvest. At three in the morning, before the dawn, there is a movement of men and mules in the streets along the low whitewashed houses and soon in their mule-carts, the long *chirrión* or shorter *volquete*, they are out in the broad plain beyond the town. Even the road has no trees, and by force of custom and inherited tradition the peasant sees no need for them and indeed would do everything in his power to prevent them being planted; they harbour birds, he says; they take away the strength of the soil. Yet some thinkers believe that most of the problems of Spain can be narrowed down to the single word: more trees, since they would greatly modify the climate and convert Castille into something like a paradise. The result of the treelessness is a climate of great bleakness, which is apt, in cities at least, to cause nervous irritability but certainly produces a hardy race; the weak die young. Lying high above sea-level and abso-

<sup>1</sup> According to 1910 statistics, the province of Salamanca has after that of Murcia the largest number of one-storied houses in Spain (Murcia 86, 945; Salamanca 76, 275).

lutely unsheltered, this plain is traversed winter and summer by a penetrating, sometimes almost imperceptible wind, which lifts columns of dust to the blue sky in summer and in winter freezes the soil relentlessly for weeks and months on end (frost has been known to begin here before the end of September and last till May). The chief winter wind is the Cierzo, but it is the wild North-West Gallego — Fray Luis de Leon's "Gallego insano"—that does the crops most harm. Little happens at Cantalapiedra—a wedding or a funeral—but at Pentecost the yearly *fête* is held and for three days processions pass through the streets, while on September 8 there is a *novillada* (an improvised bullfight) fraught with much amusement and some danger to the youth of the place. Although the life there is quiet it is not without its simple pleasures, as that of the gathering round the great hearth fire of a winter evening or the dancing to pipe (*dulzaina*) and drum (*tamboril*). Here as elsewhere in Castille the impression is less of sadness and gloom than of grave, well-balanced serenity and a certain intensity. One is forced to the conclusion that the happiest people is not necessarily that which has the most varied and frequent amusements. The Castilian peasant enjoys his life in a very sane and simple way. Here at least there is peace and well-being, hard work by day and at night the silence of the stars, broken only by the voice of the night watchman calling the hours. In the months of harvest the peasants

have five meals a day, an early breakfast, perhaps a hunk of bread and sausage (*chorizo*) and a glass of wine, ten o'clock breakfast, one o'clock *almuerzo*, *merienda* in the afternoon, and supper (*cena*). The most substantial meal is perhaps that of midday, with the *cocido* (or *puchero*) which forms the staple dish of Castille and indeed of the whole of Spain, and consists chiefly of *garbanzos*, potatoes and bacon (*tocino*). The *garbanzo* (gram or chick-pea; in Portuguese simply *građ*, "grain") is typical of the healthy and excellent plain nourishing food of the Castilian, food that knows no mashing and mincing but keeps the race strong and hardy. *Garbanzos* are eaten not only by the poor but by almost everyone throughout Spain at the midday meal; only superior *hôtels* now discard them as too Spanish for the passing traveller's taste. (The Spanish equivalent of our phrase to earn one's bread and butter is "to earn one's *garbanzos*".) The best are now said to be those of Fuentesauco, but Teresa Panza praised those of Martos.<sup>1</sup> It must be confessed that the appearance of this wizened vegetable when uncooked is not prepossessing, although it has the advantage of keeping almost for ever; but when soaked for twenty-four hours and boiled for one hour they swell out and become a soft yellow like little pats of butter.

<sup>1</sup> In 1918 Spain exported about half a million sterling of *garbanzos*. The total yield was 1,167,274 hectolitres from 224,907 hectares sown. In the same year Spain held the sixth place, after the United States, Canada, India, France and Italy, in wheat production.

They are one of the many things of Castille which are much better than they seem to the ignorant ; eaten with potatoes they are especially excellent and would soon, one fancies, be a favourite food if introduced into England and Ireland. In the month of August a procession of gleaners, tired but up-standing neatly dressed good-looking women, come into Cantalapiedra daily, a large sheaf on their head, a great straw hat and tiny earthen water-jar hanging at their waists. They make an average of ten *reales* (two and a-half *pesetas*) a day during a month. The plain without fences or hedges might seem to be the property of one large land-owner, but is really divided into quite small fields, which are reaped with sickles by men in brown or dull blue or black with leathern apron (*fachal*) and leathern bracelet (*mangote*) on the right arm ; and women with large home-made hats of straw and blue or scarlet skirts. That is of course only part of the labour, and the children outside town and village drive round and round on wooden sledges drawn by mules threshing out the corn, while men and women sift and toss, sift and toss the chaff and grain in a choking cloud of dust and minced particles of straw. Despite the summer drought and the parched appearance of the surface of the soil, the crops flourish owing to a subterranean supply of water. Here and there water wells up into round pools which remain ever clear and full although all the mules and flocks of the countryside come to drink there. Often one may see by

their parched and trampled edge a great flock of glossy white sheep huddled one against another to shelter from the fierce heat of the summer sun, and the shepherd standing motionless near, his ass also motionless, on which after penning the flock in their fold he will ride back to Cantalapiedra for the night and which is loaded with all his implements and worldly goods, when, in the autumn, he journeys slowly with his flock to the warmer province of Extremadura, for despite the existence of trains the type of *pastor trashumante* is not yet quite extinct: many prefer to go on foot, their flock grazing by the way. Round Cantalapiedra a few evergreen oaks are the only trees—the peasants take to these more kindly since the pigs fatten under them in autumn—and over the whole immense plain the cloudless sky, in August a glowing turquoise, seems to descend bodily like a great canopy and envelop the earth. The narrow road from Cantalapiedra to Madrigal de las Altas Torres (which is just inside the province of Ávila) descends into the dry bed of the river Trabancos (a tributary of the Duero) by which is a spring of soft drinking water, although no one uninformed of its virtues would think of drinking it, since it has the colour of very soapy water. It was on this road that the Augustinian San Juan de Sahagun was robbed by brigands who took even his breviary. A little later one of them went to confess at the Augustinian Convent at Salamanca and the confessor was his victim, who, without



revealing this, gave him a sum of money after exhorting him to mend his ways. Madrigal was called "of the Lofty Towers" not because the tip of its church-tower, looking like a little sentry box, is seen for leagues across the plain but because of the turrets of its fortified walls. It has now fallen from its high estate and is little but a mass of interesting and neglected ruins, although it keeps its pride as the town where Queen Isabella the Catholic was born. (She died at the castle of Medina del Campo). Fray Luis de Leon, who died at the great Augustinian Convent here in 1591, is less familiar to the inhabitants; careful inquiries elicited from an old man of seventy that his father had known Fray Luis. The Sierra de Ávila is very faint in the distance beyond the plain of stubblefields. Swallows in hundreds skim swiftly across the threshing floors outside the town, and storks are not uncommon. The storks arrive in February and leave towards the end of August, gathering in hundreds, before they migrate, in a marsh formed by the Trabancos to the east of Cantalapiedra. Thus even in autumn there is not merely the corn, although the peasant's interest is centred in this. To the uninitiated nothing appears more alike than one field of corn to another, but just as the Galician peasant distinguishes between a score of different chestnuts, the Castilian tells wheat from wheat, for which there is an incredible quantity of names, varying from province to province. The colour of stalk or ear or grain,

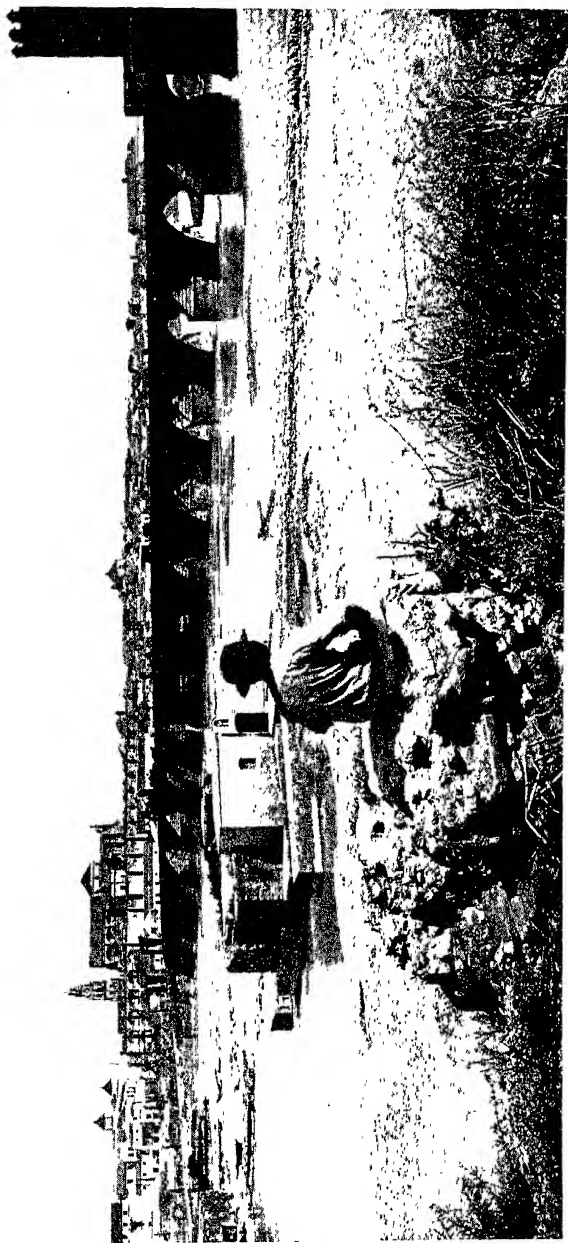
gives rise to various names: thus *trigo moreno* or *berrendo* (" *variandus* " ?), *rubion*, *rubial*, *arisnegro*, *azulenco*, *zorollo* (" *cereolus* " ?); or it is called after its shape, as *chamorro* (*mocho*, i.e. without *arista*), or season, as *marzal*, *otoñal*. The best of all is the *trigo candeal*, which gives the whitest flour.<sup>1</sup> Sometimes these names explain the names of villages, as for instance, San Martín de Rubiales or Salmeron, Salmeroncillo de Abajo, Salmeroncillo de Arriba. *Salmerón* is a variety of *fanfarrón* or Berbery wheat, which yields a good but not a plentiful crop. One of the delights of these plains of Castille are the wonderful cloudless sunsets, changing from pale gold, translucent and intense, to brown and luminous green and molten silver. Against this sky every leaf of even distant trees, every tiniest detail of a cathedral tower are etched with marvellous distinctness as by a master craftsman. The trees stand motionless as though they had never moved and would never move a single leaf; yet clearly they are not dead but filled with a concentrated fervent intensity of life. These trees in the sunset are indeed emblems of the Castilian temperament.

## SEGOVIA

Those who see Segovia in passing leave it with an overwhelming impression of light and colour

<sup>1</sup> Cf. " *Don Quixote*," I. 31: " *El trigo era candeal o trechel?—No era sino rubion, respondió Sancho.*" The yield of wheat per acre varies greatly according to soil and climate. In the year 1916-17 the yield in the province of Segovia was 743 hectolitres per hectare, while in that of Zaragoza it was 1,456.

and a longing to return. This first impression was perhaps of a loveliness not wholly Castilian, of wonderful buildings set in a frame of blue, green and white: mountains, trees and snow. Those who have stayed in Segovia longer know that it is as Castilian, as *castizo*, as it is beautiful. Those peasants in black and brown and blue who come riding solemnly into the town under the arches of the mighty aqueduct as they must have done when the aqueduct was being built nearly two thousand years ago, and who now live permanently in the glazed earthenware of the Zuloagas; that dædal of paved alleys and ancient inns and quaint little shops, which one may miss altogether if one does not wander into it by chance from the Plaza de la Constitución; the very names of the inns (Posada de la Rubia, de los Caballeros, del Potro, de la Paloma, Parador de la Virgen, de los Vizcainos) prove that fortunately Segovia is only superficially a modern city. If the traveller arrives by train the first thing that he sees may be a large *restaurant* with a notice outside it in the station informing him that potatoes are fried here English-fashion, *a la inglesa*; at the *hôtel* the first thing he sees may be a scarlet *botones* (buttons, boots), who will seem as out of place at Segovia as a boiled lobster in St. Paul's Cathedral; the first thing he sees when he looks out of his window may be the "Calle de Don José Canalejas" and the warning that "begging is forbidden in this capital." But let him not be discouraged nor think that "for



CORDOVA

A PANORAMA OF THE TOWN, SHOWING THE CATHEDRAL AND THE FAMOUS BRIDGE



such a journey no saddlebags were needed." The fine black *marranos*, half the size of a donkey, which embellish the poorer streets of Ávila are not permitted here; worse still, in the window of a *librería* out of four or five score books displayed for sale all but three or four are translations of second-rate French novels; an indication, possibly, to the favourite reading of the cadets at Segovia. But these are little superficial things and perhaps mere symptoms of a passing phase or fashion. The real Segovia lives on beneath these iniquities. It has indeed a modern as well as an ancient side, but in the rivalry between old and new the old easily prevails. You may meet a troop of mounted cadets in their grey uniform and white and red caps, but presently you will come upon a little company of Carmelites in their tattered frocks of dark wine colour and large yellow-brown rosaries, monks and novices going for a walk barefoot and bareheaded in a little cloud of dust outside the town. If the "sereno" has been forbidden to sing the hours he nevertheless still exists and may live to sing again. Old Segovia, the Cathedral, the Alcazar, the Aqueduct, the Church of El Parral—these remain in all their ancient splendour. The heart of the most old-fashioned traveller may rejoice when the shaky omnibus from the station carries him into the narrow Corriillo de San Clemente and under an arch of the Roman Aqueduct (el Puente, which often serves as a trademark for Segovian manufactures). The Plaza de la Constitución itself,

for all its new-fangled name, has a delightfully ancient and irregular appearance, with old brown tiled roofs, erratic dormer windows and houses jostling and toppling out of the Church of San Miguel. Close by, the yard-wide streets between tall houses, the Calle de la Herrería, de la Nevería, del Malcocinado are a most curious study. Opposite, the broader but deserted Calle de los Escuderos has a famine-stricken air worthy of its name, and parallel with it, if one may say parallel of streets so irregular, the Calle de los Leones goes down past the cathedral. The cathedral in a summer midday is like a mountain solitude; not a voice, not a shuffling step is heard by the great pillars stained from the windows in mellow splotches of green and red and purple. Mass is sung daily at nine o'clock, when the fierce morning sun thrusts glowing patterns from the stained glass along wall and pillar or sends shafts of coloured light into the gloom of the ancient carved choir-stalls. The notes of the fine organ sound in alternations of prayer and praise; first a thin small voice beseeching, supplicating, seems to fly out through a high window of magnificent glass, then comes a crash of triumph, as though choir and aisles and clustered pillars were joining in praise, and then the voice above alone, but now soft and peaceful. Some of the stained windows of the cathedral begin in an ordered design and end in a beautiful patchwork of many colours, colours so true, various and intense as to hold the mind in a spell. No

modern skill could equal the haphazard magic of these gleaming mosaics. It is the glory of Segovia that pretentious modern houses have not been built beneath the legs of the giant aqueduct. The streets and plaza (El Azoguejo) are here of the simplest and most modest ; vegetables and earthenware jars are sold on the cobbles, which are not lined even with a pavement, so that the aqueduct rises in its full grandeur from the very ground, one of the few great unspoilt marvels of ancient Rome. So mighty is it that it is curious and amusing how easily it is lost in the narrow neighbouring streets ; one is ashamed to ask where the aqueduct is and waits patiently until it reappears unexpectedly in bold majestic arches against the sky. On the other side Segovia finishes in a precipice of rock, with the razor-like edge of the Alcazar rising sheerly above it. Far from the Alcazar one goes down by stone steps and cobbles—strange *callejones* and *travesías*, *bajadas*, *escalinatas* with here and there a *calleja* or a *rinconada*—or by a wider cobbled street which is like a country lane, with rough stone walls overgrown by plants. Segovia is more dead and crumbling here than on the aqueduct side, where there is plenty of life, very humble life, in the Calle del Puente de la Muerte y de la Vida and other narrow streets ; many a primitive sign-board shows the modest industry of their inhabitants, as for instance the drawing of a boot, with the words “ Michael makes and repairs.” Beneath the Alcazar the Eresma flows in beautiful reflective



depths between willows and poplars. The view of the Alcazar from below is magnificent; it towers into the sky with all the *gallardia* of Castille. Opposite, below, the square tower of the Fuenciscla Church stands insignificantly against another sheer precipice of yellowish stone. Here criminals used to be hurled down, and this church commemorates the miraculous rescue by the Virgin of a woman wrongfully accused.<sup>1</sup> A similar grace was not vouchsafed to the infant prince accidentally dropped from a window of the Alcazar in the Middle Ages. In the cool of the evening the wiser citizens of Segovia cross the bridges to the walks outside the town. A beautiful path goes above the little river Clamores in its deep narrow gully. Poplars rivalling in height those of Cuenca grow by the stream's side but scarcely reach above the level of this path and are completely dwarfed by the Alcazar above. Further on the river becomes more clamorous—a mere mountain stream—and may be heard even from the path above. To the right are hills of shrill-green mushroom-shaped pine trees and distances of blue mountains, and to the left, on a steep hill of poor houses, old and irregular, with dark-brown tiled roofs and green window-blinds, the Cathedral is massed magnificently above the Clamores and the yellow-brown city walls.

<sup>1</sup> “Et ecce,” says Fray Alonso de Espina in the “Fortalicium Fidei,” one of Spain's incunables, “ut mox precipitata fuit apparuit sibi [*sic*] Virgo beata eam suis in manibus excipiens et illesam in profundo vallis ponens”; or, to quote the impious ironic Ford, the downcast lady was let down gently.

Further on again appears the Roman aqueduct, first against blue mountains, then, against a light purple and opal evening sky, which fills its arches with soft light. From San Millan, the church of curious and beautiful capitals, one may see all the towers of Segovia in the growing dusk, those of San Martín and the Cathedral, the tower of the house of the Marqués de Lozoya, the little square tower of San Clemente, built of a pink-purplish brick. The tower of beautiful San Esteban is still rebuilding. In its fall it destroyed a great part of the lovely cloister. External cloisters are a peculiar feature of Segovia's most beautiful churches. That their position is not unfraught with danger the San Esteban catastrophe proves; but the external cloister of San Martín, with its twenty double columns, of capitals exquisitely and individually carved, and visible in all its details from the street, is not the least of the attractions of this beautiful city, which in wealth and variety of colour outshines every other city of Castille. It is a paradise for artists by reason of this wealth of colour and the many curious and noble peasant types. A little apart, above the stream Alamillos (dim. plur. of *álamo*, "poplar" and also "aspen") stands the old church of San Juan de los Caballeros, which Don Daniel Zuloaga made his workshop and museum.

#### ÁVILA DE LOS CABALLEROS

Ávila is the City of the Saints, and especially of one saint, the wise, sensible and human Santa

Teresa, whose spirit still broods over Ávila. It lies high in the mountain uplands of Castille, nearly 4,000 feet above the sea's level in a country entirely bare and treeless. Seen from the town, trucks standing in the high-lying station against the sky seem like the decaying skeleton of some huge prehistoric monster. The station is well outside the town so that there is nothing to disturb Ávila's ancient peace. Tram-cars and carriages are unknown in Ávila, the *diligencias* and motor-cars that go to various places in the neighbourhood scarcely enter the town and the only other wheeled traffic is a rattling omnibus or two flying between the station and the pleasant little *fondas*, the Hôtel Inglés and the Hôtel del Jardín, on opposite sides of the cathedral. At the Inglés, which is built low round a court covered by a great canopy of vine, *veraneantes* find themselves literally under the shadow of the cathedral, and as they sit out in the evening look across the rough granite flags of the little cathedral square to its splendid doorway. Ávila would be a place very pleasant to live in were it not for its bleak climate and unsheltered position. Both might be remedied to some extent by the planting of trees. At present there is a scarcity of water, the *fondas* have no bathroom, the streets are not watered, and the wind (and Ávila is at the mercy of the slightest breath of any wind that blows) sends little whirlwinds of hard granite dust into one's eyes. But one would not willingly criticize in Ávila. Some would call it a dead town,

but it is a good deadness, and certainly there is more happiness there than in most modern cities. Religion here is cheerful, natural and unprofessional. There is nothing hypocritical or forbidding, prim, gloomy or depressing about the austerity of the place. If there is mysticism it is of the Spanish realistic kind. One remembers here Santa Teresa's maxims, "Shun all singularity so far as possible, for it is a great evil," "Let us be cheerful in sorrows and troubles," "Never exaggerate, but say with moderation what you feel." Surely it is the traveller himself who would be dead to imagination and right feeling were he not to stay or trifle with a desire to stay for weeks in the Posada de la Plaza Cerrada in the tiny Calle de la + (Cruz), the wall of which opposite the inn is formed by the cathedral; or, better still, in the Posada de la M<sup>te</sup> y de la Vida, which is next door, and of which one has so tempting a glimpse through the great doorway. The massive wooden door painted dark green and heavily studded with nails stands open to show an inner *patio* of cobbles and granite pillars and pollard acacias, in the shade of which muleteers are watching a horse being clipped. The Inn of Death and Life! To adopt such a name, with Death coming before Life, might seem a courageous act on the part of an innkeeper. The abbreviation too, D<sup>th</sup>, death being too familiar to spell out in full, is curious and characteristic. You will not have gone far in Ávila before you come upon some quaint little funereal shop, called "Funeraria" or "Pompas

fúnebres," with wreaths and coffins. The thought of death is as present as that of God and the Saints ; nor is it a subject of brooding sadness, it is accepted simply and frankly, as wise men accept the inevitable. " O quanta fiducia erit morituro quem nullius rei affectus detinet in mundo ! " " To live without God is to die many times," said the Saint of Ávila. " We are here pilgrims," she also said, " and it is of great value to see what is beyond and to know where we shall live." " To me death seems a very easy thing for him who serves God, since in an instant he finds his soul freed from this prison and set at rest." The slender graceful granite crosses, plain, but with individual character, which are to be seen everywhere at Ávila (where even the telegraph posts sometimes take the form of a cross), tell of life as a pilgrimage to that which is beyond. " Partimos cuando nacemos." As soon as one leaves the railway station one begins to see them, and one finds them continually in street and square or on rocks outside the town. They are all of one pattern except that the grey granite is sometimes rounded, sometimes square, and some, as those in the old churchyard of San Segundo, have scarcely legible inscriptions on their base. The narrow streets of Ávila are rarely level, they are cobbled or flagged with granite or have central and side pavements of granite and cobbles between. The houses are of massive granite with iron " cancels " (*rejas*) and doors of solid wood, dark-green or weather-beaten grey, cushioned or carved, or studded

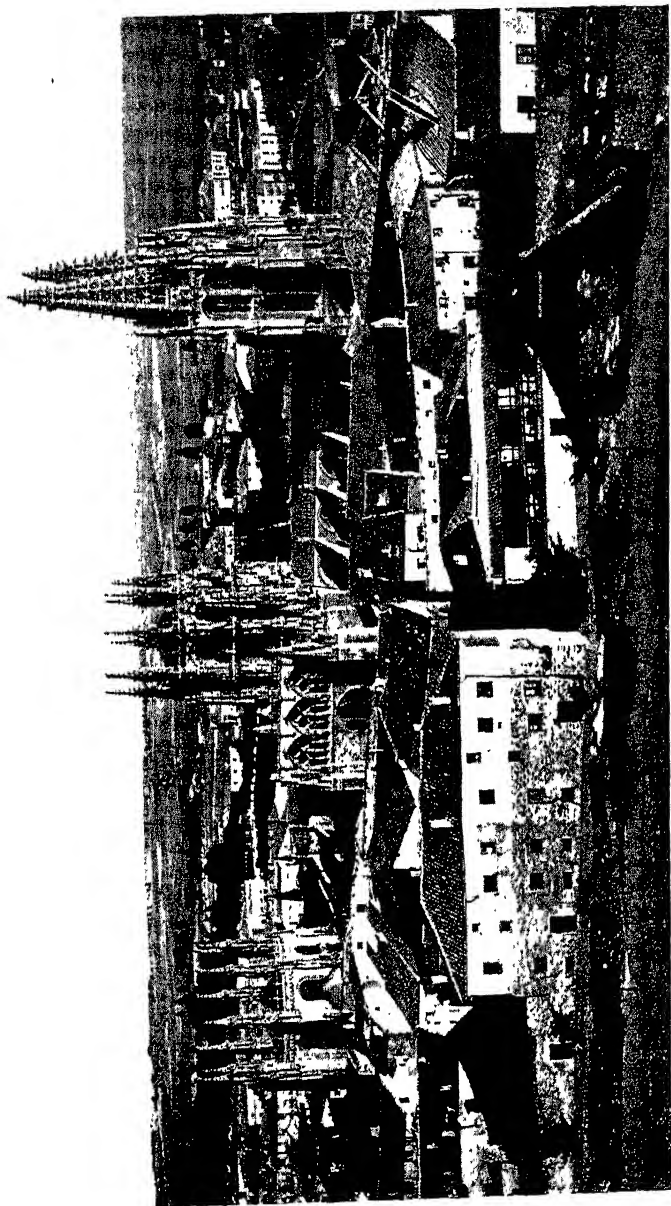
with huge-headed nails ; they have ancient complicated locks and iron knockers. Mules, horses or donkeys, with great wicker panniers that take the whole width of the street, occasionally cross a granite or cobbled *plaza* with a ringing sound of hoofs. Dark red-brown water-jars, almost the colour of a Carmelite's frock, are wheeled over the cobbles in barrows. Sometimes, but rarely, one hears the cry of a fruitseller, the slow monotonous cry, " Ciruelas buenas, ¿quién quiere ciruelas? " The milk and bread are brought on muleback, in the panniers. A donkey passes with a mountain of red *botijos* for sale ; they gleam from between the netting of the panniers on either side. Two charcoal sellers, dressed in black and blue, ride along on one horse, having sold their sacks. The sudden clatter of a passing horse's hoofs is heard far up the street and vanishes slowly, like a small avalanche of stones on a mountain-side. Indeed in this clear atmosphere every sound is like a stone falling in hushed waters. There is often a wind at Ávila, but it is a subtle silent wind, not only invisible but sometimes unnoticed. On a grey morning, when soft curtains of cloud hang over the town and a misty rain is falling and there is apparently no breath of wind, one has only to watch the cord of a green window-blind or a vineleaf in a *patio* to see them sway slightly from time to time, and on cloudless days in the quiet air a little whirlwind of dust will be blown up suddenly in the street. In the narrow streets that go down steeply

at the edge of the town children play among huge and gaunt black *marranos*. In the Barrio de las Vacas (Quarter of Cows) the main street is of poor low houses whitewashed in front, each with a huge vine across the door, its stem protected by masonry or by loose stones built round it like an oven. The houses of the Cuesta de la Gracia (Hill of Grace) are almost equally poor but very differently adorned, for here each house has its terrace of trodden earth in front of the door, with a small acacia to give shade and a seat formed of a single block of granite. The small barred windows in August are bright with geraniums, hydrangeas and *claveles*. The magnificent outer walls of Ávila, the finest in Europe, which have survived for nearly a thousand years unchanging as the hills, are mainly of granite, glistening with mica, but also have parts of red sandstone and brick. The beautiful Romanesque churches are likewise of granite and red sandstone. The red sandstone church of San Pedro is little and low—the shadow of the projecting roof-tiles falls on the top of the church's doorways—but its three doorways rival its magnificent rose-window in beauty. The church of San Vicente is still more beautiful. Many of the figures on the principal doorway have been damaged. "In disturbances," said the woman with the keys.—"What! a revolution in Ávila?—Oh, that was in the time of the Moors. Ávila is very quiet now.—It used to have industries?—*Ahora* no se hace nada (now nothing is done)." There was no regret in the answer, rather

a quiet satisfaction. Opposite the Cruz de los Cuatro Postes—the famous cross between four tall granite pillars—but on the Ávila side of the river Adaja, which in summer is a trickling stream crossed on stepping-stones, stands one of the most curious of Ávila's churches, that of San Segundo. This beautiful humble building almost resembles a farm, yellow-brown with a tiled roof, in an overgrown churchyard. Mass is said here only once a year and in one of the corners of the church stood a bicycle. A bicycle in Ávila! It has a fine wooden ceiling and a noble figure—kneeling—of its eponymous saint, who was Bishop of Ávila. The Dominican Convent of Santo Tomás lies a little way outside the town. Its church has beautifully carved choir-stalls (without figures of men or animals), and contains the lovely white marble tomb and figure of the Prince Don Juan, the only son of the Catholic Kings, whose arms and emblems are everywhere in this convent, in wood and stone. His death in 1497 was a great tragedy for Spain. The tomb is the work of the Italian sculptor, Domenico Fancelli, but it is noteworthy that the best sculptured animal on the monument is the exquisite figure of a small bull. In the sacristy is a sterner memory—the tomb of Tomas de Torquemada, the Grand Inquisitor, who died in the following year, nearly four times as old as the gentle prince who was but nineteen. His tomb is plain and grim, rough granite good enough for him, as it was for Domingo de Soto, and indeed one can



hardly imagine the old inquisitor sleeping at his ease under Italian sculpture. Santo Tomás is set amid other convents and churches. There is the convent of the nuns of Santa Clara, commonly known as Las Gordillas (lit. "little stout women"), that of Las Madres, that of Santa Ana. Then there is the church of Nuestra Señora de las Vacas, the church of Santiago with its octagonal tower, San Nicolás with a square tower of yellow stone, San Isidro, below the Cuesta de los Gitanos (Gipsies' Hill). Above, just inside the city walls (for it is on the Santo Tomás side that the city chiefly overflows), is the church of Santa Teresa, on the site of the house in which the saint was born. The interest is not in the church itself or its gaudy interior, but in the small Puerta de Santa Teresa opposite, through which as a girl Santa Teresa must have gazed so often into the country beyond, the *allá*, and which frames a peculiar, beautiful view of bare, patched upland, stubblefields and the brown of ploughed fields and dark-blue and purple *sierra*. It is the Convento de la Encarnación on the other side of the town that contains relics of the Saint. This convent now has some twenty Carmelite nuns, their dress dark coffee colour with black hood and white *capa*. Here is the block of wood which Santa Teresa used as a pillow, here the chair on which San Juan de la Cruz sat to talk with the Saint and was raised into the air as they conversed. To the girl *sacristana* this and other miracles were intensely real: they might be happening to-day



BURGOS

A GENERAL VIEW OF THE TOWN, SHOWING THE CATHEDRAL



or to-morrow. The convent has a fine view of Ávila, finer though less complete than that from the Cuatro Postes. The city is seen in profile, to the left the Church of San Francisco, and the yellow tower of San Andrés and above them a magnificent view of the noble church of San Vicente. Then a tower of the cathedral shoots up from the mighty city walls, the church of Mosen Judí is further to the right, and below the splendid line of wall, here seen at its best, is the Hermitage of St. Martin and the church of Nuestra Señora de la Cabeza, its churchyard thick with yellow grass, like a stubblefield. Beyond it the church of San Francisco is now private property—"no hay culto." Many details of its spacious interior are beautiful, but it is now used as a stable, oxen and horses occupying what should be the choir-stalls. The cathedral of Ávila imposes itself externally by its fine massive proportions. It is more Gothic than Romanesque, although originally it may have been entirely Romanesque, and the ancient portion jutting circularly through and above the city wall (yet the cathedral now stands almost in the centre of the town) is more like a stout fortress than a soaring Gothic cathedral. Inside, however, one has a noble impression of height, and there is some fine old glass, and beautiful choir-stalls. Some consider Juan de Arfe's Ávila monstrance of massive silver finer even than those of Seville and Valladolid. Its slender pillars have plain grooves or vines, with bunches of grapes, twining up them. Below are

the twelve Apostles and above them the scene of the sacrifice of Isaac. Above that again is the figure of God the Father, seated with the world on His knees, and the whole is surmounted by bells and a crucifix. But one is inclined to say that all Ávila is a cathedral, such is its air of dignity and peace. Many of the streets have saints' names, the very shopkeepers seem to have holy names, Angel, Jesus, and the flour factory, decently situated outside the city, is called Fabrica de Santa Teresa. The little bookshops mostly sell religious books and a few school texts. The chief sound that one carries away from Ávila is the music of the bells. With what a clear shock they ring out in the crystal air from the moment when the first angelus has announced the coming of day to sleeping Ávila, where prayer and praise go up continually and lamps burn perpetually from a hundred altars. Especially on Sundays and days of *fiesta* the air is full of the ringing of bells. Singly, in silvery cadences, or together in linked rosaries of sound, dominated but not silenced by the crashing of the great cathedral bells, they fill the sky with mirth and rejoicing. Scarcely elsewhere can there be so many churches in so small a space. The shadow of the cathedral almost touches the tiny hermitage of Our Lady of the Snows, and church and chapel, convent and hermitage, are similarly linked together throughout the city. In the streets one may come across a little group of Franciscans, who wear a dark brown almost wine-coloured frock, somewhat

resembling that of the Carmelites, but with black hats and white cords, or a bevy of white and black Dominicans, going up from their beautiful convent of Santo Tomas to say Mass in their church of Mosen Judí in the centre of the town, or two sisters of charity, whose great white hoods meet as they converse.

### THE SERENO

Nothing gives a more delightful idea of the climate of Spain than the name of the night watchman—the *Sereno*. He is so called from the last word of his rhythmic cry; for instance, *Ave María Purísima, las once y sereno* (eleven o'clock and a clear sky). Of course he does sometimes say *nublado* (a cloudy sky), but the more frequent word has given him his name, and reminds us that it is a country with some 3,600 hours of sunshine in the year.

He carries a lantern and a pike (*chuzo*), the thud of which on the pavement may be heard throughout the night in any old Castilian town, and a great bunch of keys to open the house-doors for those who return late from the *cafés*, for which service he receives a couple of *pesetas* a month from each householder. One hears a clapping of hands, a shout for the *sereno*, then silence, then another clapping, another shout, and finally the slow advance of the pike thumping on the granite far up the street, then a heavy jangling of keys, a short conversation, a *buenas noches*, the slamming of a massive street door, every sound distinct in the clear air and prevailing silence.

The *sereno* varies from town to town: in some he wears a short cloak, in others his black voluminous *capa* reaches to his feet, and he has a funereal air of an inquisitor of yore. In the smaller towns of Catalonia he now (it is quite a recent innovation) sings the hours (*canta las horas*) in Catalan, and the harsher *Alabat siga Deu* (Glory be to God) replaces the Castilian *Alabado sea Dios* or *Ave María*, with which he prefaces the telling of the hour. It might have been thought that so harmless, useful, and picturesque a figure, to the foreigner one of the delights of travel in Spain, would have escaped the attentions of the politician, but this is so far from being the case that a battle-royal has sometimes waged round the *sereno*. One of the first acts of the town council of Seville after the proclamation of the Republic fifty years ago was to forbid the *serenos* to use the words *Ave María Purísima*; these words on the lips of an official would be a recognition of a religion which was no longer that of the State. And to-day the more progressive citizens affect to regard the *sereno* as ridiculous and useless, and are rather ashamed that the foreigner should come across a custom which no longer prevails in more "civilized" countries. In various large towns he is accordingly forbidden to sing the hours.

At Segovia, for instance, and even at Seville, lovely, conservative Seville, he now walks the streets in silence, the pretexts for this being that he should be able to wrap a scarf about his mouth

on a cold night, and that thieves may not be able to "place" him and operate in security elsewhere. For the same reason at Seville he no longer carries the *chucho*, the familiar sound of which announced his presence. At Valencia the *sereno* still exists, and even cries the hours, but the duty of opening the doors has been given to night guards, and the next step will naturally be to ask what is the use of the *sereno*, and to abolish him.

In other large towns, as at Madrid, he no longer cries the hours, but keeps his bunch of keys to open the doors for the *café* revellers—that is, for the many citizens who sit nightly over a single cup of coffee and much conversation till one, two, and three in the morning. But the right place to listen to the *sereno* is in some small, ancient town of Castile, such as Leon or Ávila, where his melodious chant echoes along the narrow granite streets beneath the starlit sky. Long may he continue to delight the heart of all who care for harmonious and ancient things, and to give sleepless nights to all Radicals and Republicans. If the *serenos* were abolished one of the attractions of Spain would be gone, and Spain attracts many a traveller now for the very reason that she has nobly preserved her ancient customs and traditions.

## SORIA

The heat can be intense in Soria in a summer midday, but in winter it is one of the coldest towns in Spain. The wind blows mercilessly across the bleak treeless plain (3,000 feet above sea-level)



from Moncayo and other distant *sierras*, so that men go with cloak wrapped over mouth and chin, and only their eyes are visible between hat and *capa*. It is the country sung by the poet Don Antonio Machado :

Es la tierra de Soria árida y fría.

The town itself has but some 8,000 inhabitants, but it contains many beautiful churches, beautiful for their sculptured fronts and cloisters and for the colour of the sandstone of which they are built, rich hues of reddish-brown, golden-brown, oxidized rust-colour, and sometimes almost purple : the colour, for instance, of parts of the noble façade of San Domingo is found again in some of the small cobbles of the court in front of it, which are purple like ripe plums. The roofs are delightful deep red-brown tiles. From San Domingo the Calle de la Doctrina, a street of massive buildings of brown stone, descends to the Plaza del Vergel and on to the collegiate church of San Pedro. The Calle de la Doctrina is a street of little traffic, but two nuns were going down ; a boy with a blouse of intense dull blue was leading a mule ; a baker passed, the huge oxen panniers of his donkey filled with flat round loaves, *hogazas* weighing two kilos each ; and the principal bookseller of the town, a frail-looking little rosy-cheeked old man such as one frequently meets among the more sedentary citizens in these colder regions of Castille, was going to his beautiful garden, where almost every kind of fruit and flower, sometimes brought from distant lands,

are crowded into a small space, so that they shelter and shade one another in a wild profusion. Besides his garden his principal hobby is the breeding of hounds, evidently a Castilian characteristic: one has only to go through the poorer streets of a Castilian city to see them lying in front of almost every house.<sup>1</sup> Soria has some delightful little shops and *figones*. The houses are kept scrupulously clean, but the streets and squares are full of paper and rubbish. One might expect that the river Duero, at so great a distance from Foz and Oporto, would be here a puny, insignificant stream. It rises in the not distant Pico de Urbion, but it evidently does very well for itself among the hills, helped by its tributary the Tera, and when it passes Soria it is already a wide river, with placid metallic gleams among its reeds and sedges. Beyond the river is the church of San Juan del Duero, a ruin with a wonderful and indeed unique cloister, half Romanesque, half Byzantine, with a great Moorish horseshoe arch, a hybrid style perhaps due to the Knights Hospitallers.<sup>2</sup> Further down the river stands the little chapel of San Saturio, patron saint of the town. The ruined walls of the old castle linger in fragments on the hill above the town. Opposite, above the chapel of San Saturio,

<sup>1</sup> Soria is celebrated for its cattle; Valencian peasants come to buy them in considerable numbers. Much of the ploughing is done with black oxen.

<sup>2</sup> See Teodoro Ramirez Rojas, "La Arquitectura Románica en Soria," Soria, 1894, and José Ramón Mélida, "Excursión por Numancia pasando por Soria," Madrid, 1922.

is a great bare *sierra* which the more energetic citizens climb on the morning of St. John's Day (June 24) to see the sun "dance." (It is a widespread popular belief that the sun dances at its rising on that day.) From the bridge across the Duero picturesque steep streets, the Calle de la Zapatería, the Calle Real, with its projecting eaves, iron balconies crowded with flowers and walls of yellow or red sandstone, go up to the Collado, the principal street of the town, and the great building, with its brown-golden tower, which was formerly part of the massive Renaissance palace of the Counts of Gómar. On the left of the Calle Real, as one ascends, is a little *plaza* known as the Arco del Cuerno, through which the bulls used to be driven into the Plaza Mayor for *corridas* in days of yore. The collegiate church of San Pedro has a cloister of great beauty surrounding a neglected grass-grown court. This little town seems full of churches, San Juan de Rabanera, Santa María la Mayor, Santa María del Espino, and is surrounded with hermitages, Nuestra Señora del Miron, Nuestra Señora de la Soledad, la Ermita de la Virgen. There are also Franciscan monks and Franciscan and Dominican nuns. The inhabitants are grave, peaceful and courteous, with that unfailing courtesy, cordial or aloof, which marks the inhabitants of Old and New Castille.

#### NUMANCIA

In the little museum at Soria are displayed the Roman and Iberian finds from Numancia. Most of

the jars and implements are without inscription, there are barely half a dozen Iberian letters in the whole museum. At Numancia itself there is little to be seen and much to be imagined; the intense interest of the place can only be brought out by a more careful study than is possible in a brief visit. The site was discovered by D. Eduardo Saavedra in 1853, and excavations continue. A dozen workmen were coming in at six o'clock to the overseer's house, for it was the fortnightly pay day; they receive four *pesetas* a day and work only in the summer months. The work is under the skilful care of Don José Ramón Mélida. The town was built on a hill, the Cerro de la Muela, in a magnificent amphitheatre of distant mountains, blue above the undulating plain of golden stubblefields and red ploughland, through which the smooth white road goes to Logroño, the Pico de Urbion (7,400 feet) and the Sierra de Cebolla (over 7,000 feet) to the north, lofty Moncayo (7,600 feet) to the east, and the last ramparts of the Sierra de Guadarrama to the south. Soria was once on the extreme edge of Castille (Soria pura cabeza de Extremadura). The old frontier of Castille is quaintly described in Francisco de Berganza's *Antigüedades de España, propugnadas en las noticias de sus reyes y condes de Castilla la Vieja*.<sup>1</sup> At the foot of the hill on which

<sup>1</sup> 2 tom., ed. Madrid, 1719, 21: "Quedó por Navarra desde lo más alto de la Sierra de la Cucula hasta el río de Valbanera, donde estaba un Molino llamado Gramneto y del Collado Moncõ a Viciercas y a Peñanegra baxando hasta el nacimiento del río Arlançon. Despues passando por medio de el Monte Calcaneo

Numancia was is the little town of Garray, which appropriately has a pelota court, since Garray may be the Basque *garay* (high); above it stands solitary the little fifteenth-sixteenth century church of yellow-brown sandstone, called La Ermita de los Martires (the martyrs of Numancia, who died fighting desperately against the Roman armies).

### THE DUERO

There is always a fascination in following a river from source to mouth. Except the Guadalquivir, all the great rivers of Spain flow from Castille, since the region of la Montaña, in which, in the Sierra de Isar (= Basque *izarra*, "star"?), the Ebro rises, is the extreme northern limit of Old Castille. The Guadiana, after its first lapse in La Mancha, flows boldly in the light of the sun, strengthened by Záncara and Riansares from New Castille. The Tagus, placid at Aranjuez, fierce and rapid at Toledo, rises in the Sierra de Albarracín, between Cuenca and Teruel, whence also flows the Jucar towards Valencia. The Duero,<sup>1</sup> after passing Soria and Almazan, where it makes a sharp bend westward, traverses a plain where graze flocks of white or black sheep and where white roads go between tall poplars and little brown-roofed, brown-walled villages gather round their low square-towered

por la loma mas alta y por medio de Gazala, donde ay un Molino, hasta el rio Tera y sitio donde estuuo la Ciudad antigua llamada Garray y hasta el rio Duero." (t. i. pp. 309-10.)

<sup>1</sup> Many of the events of the *Poema de mio Cid* occur along the rivers Duero and Henares.

churches. It flows to the south of Osma, but passes Langa, with a natural castle of rocks above it and houses of the colour of the yellow and white soil below. The Duero, here a thick yellow-brown, flows through poplars. It seems to avoid large towns, old picturesque Aranda being the largest between Soria and Zamora. Aranda's grey churches and houses stand above a fertile plain of wheat, vines, fruit trees and trailing melons. A little further west Vadocondes, on the left bank, is grouped round its massive square church tower; on the right bank, its proud and noble outline on a hill, Roa, where the great Cardinal Ximenes died in 1517, and San Martin de Rubiales amid cornfields, and Bocos de Duero above tufted pines in bare grey-white and rust-coloured hills and soil, the Duero here grey-green beneath willows and alders. Then the castle of Peñafiel appears magnificent on its bare hill, crowning it against the sky, or rather in the sky, like a great ship poised in space. A few miles below Peñafiel the river, a soft olive-grey, passes a solitary grey convent, and beneath the grey town of Tudela flows green and peaceful, reflecting willows on either bank. Shunning Toro and Valladolid it between them passes the famous convent of Tordesillas and flows on through Leon, the last Spanish town on its banks being Zamora, and then for some sixty miles it forms the frontier between Spain and Portugal and rejoices in two names: Douro on its right, Duero on its left bank.

## IN THE SIERRA DE GREDOS

Madrid seen by moonlight in August across white stubblefields looks the most unreal and artificial of cities, but in the Sierra de Guadarrama, hard by, the sun sets in a sky of delicate grey, silver, and saffron, and below the granite piles itself in towers and castles and cathedrals of rock from among the cistus and juniper, or forms gorges through which comes a boundless view of plains of various browns, the very stubble as the summer ends being ploughed into a Franciscan brown. There are other enchanted regions at no great distance from Madrid. A motor-car runs between Ávila and Arenas de San Pedro in the Sierra de Gredos, a little over forty miles. It leaves in summer in early dawn when Ávila, at night the stillest of still cities, is still communing with the stars and the *serenos* are retiring to rest with lanterns still alight and gleaming *chuzos*. By the cathedral a man is sweeping the flags and cobbles with a broom of twigs. Presently the towers and belfries of Ávila are seen from a distance distinct against the dawning sky, and at five o'clock the sun turns the Sierra de Gredos to a splendid purple. Venta del Obispo (Bishop's Inn) is a solitary building in a bleak high-lying country, a long low house with a typical inn-kitchen. To the right tower the peaks of Gredos, still snowy in August. After turning the pass the road winds continually through a desolate country of pines, olives and vines, to the beautiful village of Las Cuevas del Valle, the



VALLADOLID  
THE UPPER GALLERY OF THE CLOISTERS OF THE COLEGIO DE SAN GREGORIO





houses of which have roofs of mellow brown tiles and grey chimneys, with a veranda of grey wood half-way up the house and perhaps a dash of white-wash above the balcony. Further on is the no less picturesque little brown village of La Parra, and the village called Villa de Monbeltran, with a splendid old ruined castle near it on a steep hill of olives, chestnuts and pines. Arenas de San Pedro itself is in a beautiful position in the heart of the Sierra. Scenery which combines the grandeur of Asturias with something of the charm of Andalucía, great heat made pleasant by clear streams and delicious shade, old-world Castille with all that is not commonly associated with the bleak Castilian uplands: such are the attractions of Arenas. The clean pleasant little *fonda* of Doña Dominga González can boast that Don Antonio Maura stayed here for a week quietly sketching. There is an air of ancient romance about the place. One of its streets is called Calle de la Triste Condesa. The grim old "Castle of the Moors" is in the village itself; above the village stands a large *palacio*, apparently of the eighteenth century. A splendid semi-circle of mighty peaks rises round Arenas; the Puerto del Peón, on its right the Puerto del Pico, and on its left the serrated crags and castles of rock which form Los Galayos. To the left of Los Galayos stands the massive sphinx-shaped La Apertura. The heights have pits and gullies of snow throughout the summer; the lower slopes are thickly wooded with chestnut and pine.

There are villages hidden away in these mountains, villages which, like San Esteban and Las Cuevas below, have somehow a look of the villages in the neighbourhood of Granada. There is Guisando, with 900 inhabitants, a delightful dark line of dark-brown roofs and low snowily whitewashed walls beneath La Apertura, where Philip II used to stay, at the Hieronymite convent, before he built him a house at El Escorial ; at six of an August evening the village is already in the shadow of the mountain. There is even smaller El Hornillo, with 700 inhabitants, amid pines, chestnuts, walnuts, olives, and vines, but especially famous for its great crops of peaches (*melocotones*) ; and there is El Arenal, with nearly twice as many inhabitants as Guisando, in cherry trees from which in late spring and even as late as July an abundance of cherries is brought down in carts and on mules and donkeys. Fruit trees and vines and olives grow surprisingly high up on these mountains, but the fruit ripens very late. The winters at Arenas are not nearly so severe as at unsheltered Ávila, thus proving the wisdom of the Spanish proverb, " O sierra o cien leguas de ella " (In the mountains make your stay or a hundred leagues away). Arenas is said to have nearly 4,000 inhabitants, although it does not seem a village of half that size. It has eight taverns, several olive-presses, sawing factories and exporters of chestnuts.

The " Resinera Española " Company fabricates great quantities of turpentine (*aguaraz*) and colo-

phony. Mules and horses descend from the *sierra* daily, each with four great jars of resin, every *cantaro's* mouth stuffed with bracken; and many carts rumble in with their sticky load, drawn by black or dark-brown oxen, and hung all over with resinous tins. The resin, after being boiled, is poured into shallow round tin dishes set in the blazing sun. With the sun's help it crystallizes into transparent amber colophony. One should carry away a piece of this colophony, for it can serve as a letter-weight and preserves within it all the radiance of the sun of Castille. The houses of Arenas have old grey balconies and toppling verandas, all irregular and picturesque, with vines and fruit trees. Twice a month there is a market in Arenas, and the village is then crowded with tall thin peasants from the *sierra*, dignified, handsome, smiling men and women. The men wear hats of stout felt, black or faded green or brown, which is fastened over a thin hoop of wood about an inch high and several feet in circumference. Their shirts or capacious blouses are of intense blue, their wide sashes black, black too the tight-fitting breeches, open at the knee, with a long line of small gold buttons. There would not be much colour at Arenas were it not for the bright skirts of the women—skirts scarlet or a gorgeous faded green or dull purple or a glowing patchwork of scarlet and orange—and the gay magenta, red and orange trappings and tassels of mules and asses, asses laden with fruit and gleaming vegetables and deep-red water-jars. A path along

that cheerful trout stream, the river Arenal, and then up the wooded mountain-side, leads to Guisando, far above and invisible. The trees are mostly pine or chestnut, and so far as colour goes there is but little difference between them in late summer, the light green shoots on the pines corresponding to the green of the bristling chestnut-shells. Peasants pass up from Arenas, the women carrying on their head cans made of dark wood and polished iron bands. To the right, above the hanging pine-woods, runs a ridge like a series of crenellated walls and castles, with a few late splotches of snow, apparently no bigger than a man's hand. Through pines and chestnuts come glimpses wonderfully magnificent of the sheer grey-purple granite *sierra* standing out so clearly on the smoky turquoise sky, and of the pine forests that seem ever falling through space down its precipitous flanks. All around the cicadas make an incessant music, changing and unchanging as the bare *sierra* beyond. The air is thick with the scent of pine and bracken and cistus, and from below comes a faint sound of flowing water as the Arenal chatters gaily to its stones and hedges of honeysuckle and black-berry.

#### ALCALÁ DE HENARES

Alcalá de Henares is kept alive by four regiments and a military band plays of an evening in the Plaza Mayor, a large rectangular square with well-kept plots of flowers. What are now the Casino and the Fonda de Cervantes in this Plaza Mayor

were formerly one side of the University, the darling creation of Cardinal Ximenes' old age. In vain did Salamanca implore him to bestow his bounty and zeal for reform on the ancient city of the Tormes: all his thoughts turned to the foundation and endowment of Alcalá, and after ten years, in 1508, the new University was inaugurated and the first lecture delivered. The University of Alcalá had an income of which Salamanca could only dream in envy; it did not, however, injure the University of Salamanca, which attained the height of its glory in the century that followed the foundation of Alcalá. Many notable professors soon made the younger University also famous, and the printing of Cisneros' Polyglot Bible at Alcalá in 1514-17 spread its reputation through Europe. Three centuries later, however, in 1836, Alcalá University was transferred to Madrid and Salamanca University thus survives its rival, albeit with but a twentieth of its former students. The University of Alcalá is now little more than a ruin. The seventeenth-century Patio de San Tomas de Villanueva is in good repair as it is now a college directed by the Escolapios. The magnificent front is a vestige of the former splendour of the place; the date of the original *fachada* is 1543. From the court of the building now occupied by the Escolapios a passage leads to a wide open space, formerly the principal court of the University, and from this deserted *patio* one passes into the famous Patio Trilingüe, where a wild growth of

trees and plants half hides the beautiful columns. Here is the huge door of unadorned wood, the Puerta de los Carros, through which students who failed to take their degree were ignominiously dismissed into a back street. On the right the Paraninfo, a large rectangular hall, still preserves the pulpit to which the candidate for a degree had to ascend, standing to argue there before the assembled doctors and students. A wooden gallery, raised a few feet above the floor, runs round the wall, and, above, another gallery in a succession of open arches provided room for more spectators of the curious scene. All the upper part of the walls are a beautiful intricate pattern of plateresque and the ceiling is an *artesonado* of carved wood. In modern times names of some of the most celebrated sons of Alcalá have been written round the walls, including those of Maria Ysidro, the first lady to receive the degree of doctor in Spain, Arias Montano, Lebrija, Juan de Ávila, Ciruelo, Calasanz, Ambrosio de Morales, Ignacio de Loyola, and the eighteenth-century historian Fray Enrique Florez. On the right of the Patio de San Tomas, as one enters, stands the church of the University—the work of Pedro Gumiel—where lie buried Lebrija and the divino Valles and other famous men. Outside, the wall of this chapel is rough and plain, but has a beautiful sculptured doorway. Inside the ceiling is a magnificent *artesonado*, and the stone walls are sumptuously carved. The splendid tomb of the Cardinal founder is no longer

here, it has been taken to an even nobler setting, that of the beautiful Gothic La Magistral, a collegiate church with seventeen canons. The marble tomb is one of the masterpieces of Domenico Fancelli, the Florentine sculptor, who died in 1518, a year after the Cardinal, and Diego Ordoñez, who died in 1520. Part of it is much damaged, and the leg of one of the small angels is worn to a mere thread of bone. It is surrounded by a beautiful *reja* of wrought bronze of minute and exquisitely distinct figures and ornamentation. In this church too are beautiful iron screens by Juan Frances: iron letters on one of them immortalize him as "Maestro Juan Frances, maestro maior de las obras de fiero en España." The former palace of the Archbishops of Toledo at Alcalá, now filled with dismal rows of archives, has a beautiful front and court and plateresque staircase. In one of what was formerly a succession of rooms on the ground floor, and is now one long hall, was born the cultured and unfortunate Katherine of Aragon. The *artesonado* ceilings here, as in the halls above, are of a truly royal magnificence, some of them ancient and untouched, some restored—one of the latter being studded not unhappily with huge gilt nails like stars—some painted, some plain, but all of exquisitely carved cedar-wood. The former Sala de Concilios, a hall of not much under fifty yards in length, has been restored in garish hues, which a few centuries will mellow. Most of Alcalá's streets have low arcades, generally formed by



round pillars with various capitals, some old and carefully carved, some rough and plain. Gutters project above and pour the water from the roofs on either side into the cobbled centre of the street, so that in heavy rain the whole town must sound like a great waterfall and the refuge of the *sopor-tales* (arcades) be a welcome one. In the Calle de Santiago, opposite the Church of Santiago, is the house in which Francisco Valles, called "el Divino," lived. Enriched by the bounty of Philip II, the King's physician was able to buy much land along the Henares, including the Heredad de Serafín, near the Vado del Ángel (Ford of the Angel), and he also possessed a house at Madrid in the Calle de Atocha. Off the Calle de Santiago is the Calle de Cervantes, where a tablet on a humble brick theatre marks the site of the house in which a greater than Valles and Katherine of Aragon, a greater than Philip II, was born. Alcalá has reason to be prouder of the font and of Bachiller Serrano's baptismal certificate (October 9, 1547) for Miguel de Cervantes, preserved in the church of Santa María in the Plaza Mayor, than of all the proud magnificence of the University of Fray Francisco Ximenes. This is now sinking into dust, while the works of Cervantes spread his fame through the civilized world.

#### SIGÜENZA

The little cathedral city of Sigüenza lies off the main line of travel, and is rarely seen by those who go to Spain. Those who do pay it a visit never

forget this isolated town, it becomes one of their most cherished memories. For Sigüenza is a marvel of colour, its houses are built of a sandstone which is mostly dark red, but also yellow and greyish green and sometimes almost purple, and is worn and rounded by time, so that the whole city has not only warm colour but soft and mellow lines, oddly recalling the much sunned and melted snows of the summit of the Sierra Nevada. Sometimes a street corner, to the height of about six feet, is deeply worn away in a variety of hues, red, yellow, grey-green, yellow-grey. Seen from an opposite hill the outline of the city gives the impression of a kind of Christian Alhambra, with the old greyer episcopal palace above as the Generalife. This palace was built round a great open rectangular court and had a magnificent view of the bare treeless hills of sandstone surrounding the city on all sides; one only of them has a wood of pines, and some sheltered orchards below. Up these hills of many colours, red, grey, purple, yellow, patched with stubblefields and ploughland, parched and desolate, go the white roads between lines of trees towards Teruel and Valencia, Madrid, Zaragoza, and Soria. The rooms of this palace are now bare and deserted, but one tiny room, where a queen was once imprisoned, preserves its ancient green glazed tiles. From here the picturesque Calle Mayor, a cobbled street with much worn sandstone side-pavements, goes sharply down to the small Plaza Mayor, with its low arcades of sand-

stone pillars, and to the great rose window and tall slender tower of one side of the cathedral, a beautiful romanesque building of red sandstone, built with a charming, irregular grace. Some of its coloured glass, especially a small window representing the Nativity, is very lovely. In one of the chapels—that of Santa Catalina—two grey furled flags hang on the wall, and a wooden tablet below records that they were captured from the English near Lisbon in 1589, and ordered to be placed in this chapel by the “invictissimo” Philip II, in 1590.<sup>1</sup> In the same chapel is a marble tomb with a beautifully carved recumbent figure of Fernando de Arce, Bishop of the Canary Islands, who died in 1522. The streets of this little city, with their square or rounded doorways, slender iron balconies, nail-studded doors of unpainted grey wood or of faded green, red-blue or red-brown paint, the projecting eaves and tin gargoyles for the water to pour from the roof into the centre of the street, have a very original and picturesque appearance. Sometimes a whole house-front is covered with a great vine.

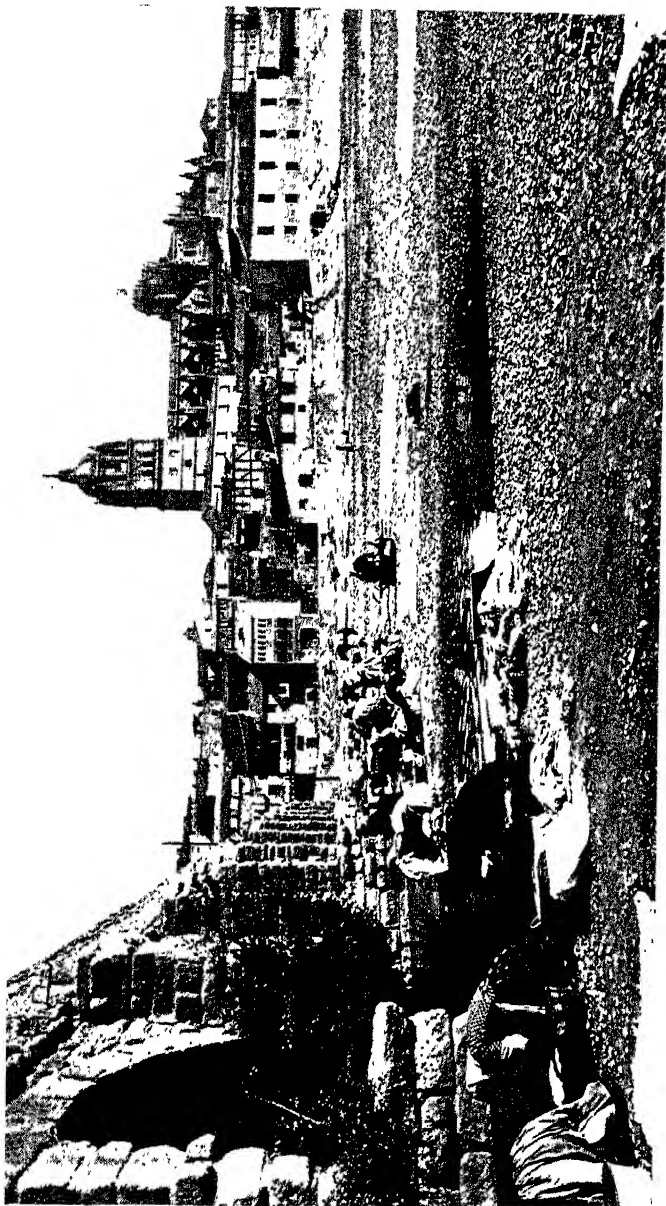
<sup>1</sup> The inscription runs: “Dos vanderas se ganaron de los Ingleses a cinco días del mes de Junio del año de mill y quiniētos ochenta y nueve, estando sobre la ciudad de Lisbona su campo, por don Sancho Brauo Arce de Lagunas, Cavallero de la Orden de Alcantara, señor del molino de la torre y capitan de cauallos. Por el inuictissimo Rey Don Philippe nuestro señor, segundo deste nombre, Patron desta capilla del glorioso y bien auenturado Sant Juan y Sancta Catherina, y como tal patron las mando pōr en ella. Pusierōse día ō n.s. ō las cādelas dl año 1590. Hase ō decir vna missa cātada e caō vn año aquel dia y visō.” “Invictissimo” in 1590 was of course only a manner of speaking.

Some of the houses have veranda arcades under the roof and dormer windows. The surrounding country produces no wine, nothing but wheat, rye, and barley. The fields are left fallow every other year, when they afford scant pasture to great flocks of black or white sheep. A subtle wind rustles through the stones and thistles of these treeless hills. Of peculiar beauty is the line of the city seen from one of these bare hills just outside. Priests and other citizens come out through a narrow archway in the cool of the evening, and a tall blue-eyed peasant, dressed in a variety of browns, with black cap, wide brown sash, *abarcas*, and a black skin of wine was coming in with a horseload of barley. Seen from here the city goes up in one long line of its ancient walls from shady avenues of poplars and elms, and the great convent of the Ursulinas, past the magnificent mass of the cathedral and the salmon or gold-brown coloured walls of the convent of the Franciscan nuns, to the twin towers of the grey deserted *palacio*. Here and there along the city walls deep enclosed gardens show the refreshing green of shrubs and trees. In a summer evening a bell sounds now and then from church and convent, and the swallows swerve above the ancient houses, that seem to have taken another coat of mellow colour from the long day's sunshine; the cathedral darkens to a chestnut hue, every detail of its austere towers seen against a sky of living silver, faintly washed with green and interlaced with thin clouds of gold—fleeces threshed delicately by the

subtle wind—and the whole outline of the city glows like a great amethyst in the sunset. The streets have delightfully preserved their ancient names, the Calle de la Yedra, the Calle del Humilladero (with the Posador del Humilladero), or those like the Calle Mayor going up from the Plaza Mayor to the Calle de Castillejo: Calle del Jesus, Calle de San Juan, Calle de los Vigiles. There are little stands of excellent fruit—the plums of Sigüenza have few rivals—along the Calle del Cardinal Mendoza (he was Bishop of Sigüenza); donkeys with water-barrels pass along the cobbled streets, these essentially Castilian streets, not narrow but straight and open, often with rough arcades. Of a Sunday peasants come in dressed in brown or black velvet, and muleteers in black and dull blue, with the white linen showing at the knee. One leaves Sigüenza with one's mind stored with details of quaint irregular streets and massive ancient buildings of many curious hues, and with the pleasant memory of its mellow clocks and bells and of the thin blue smoke above brown tiles.

#### MADRID

Madrid's peculiar elusive charm consists perhaps largely in its isolation and in its clean transparent air and the nearness of the sky that enfolds it. The subtle atmosphere, the enveloping canopy of sky are familiar in the deserted uplands of Castille, but Madrid is the only large city in which their presence is felt. Madrid thus, besides being a great capital of splendid streets, has something of the



SALAMANCA

A GENERAL VIEW, SHOWING THE CATHEDRAL AND THE OLD ROMAN BRIDGE  
IN THE FOREGROUND PEASANT WOMEN WASHING THEIR CLOTHES IN THE FORMES



hospitable aloofness, the *gallardia* of a mountain village ; it is a Vienna nearly two and a half thousand feet above the sea. The clear light throws everything into sharp relief, the sky comes pressing down into the streets, and a shower of hail in a white and blue March day, or a sudden view of mountains crowned with snow, or the luxuriant foliage of a park outlined, artificial and motionless, on the glowing serene summer sky, have the strangeness of a new experience. They are common things seen in a new light, and the same unusualness attaches to the buildings, the banks and shops and central post office, all on a magnificent scale (their solid sensible architecture contrasts favourably with the tawdry design of some of Barcelona's modern buildings), so that the Calle de Alcalá, without containing any great churches or ancient colleges, is certainly now one of the most splendid and beautiful streets in Europe. It was a stroke of genius on the part of Philip II to transfer his capital to Madrid. He could not prevent foreigners from living in his capital and court, but he could isolate this cosmopolitan element from the rest of the country ; he could not foresee the trains and motor-cars. Even without easy means of distant travel, however, foreigners in Madrid might consider themselves well off, since they have most enchanting country and beautiful scenery within easy reach and Toledo almost at their door. The climate of Madrid has certainly been maligned.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Agustin de Rojas, *El Viage Entretenido*, 1915 ed. p. 549 : "es el lugar más sano que conocemos."



From the middle of July to the middle of September the heat is unmistakable and unabated. The sun tyrannizes from a cloudless sky, and one fancies that one might easily light a match by simply waving it through the air. But it is a very dry heat and except in the sun rarely insufferable. Those who refrain from going out of doors during the first four or five hours of the afternoon need feel no real discomfort. One is inclined to think that the holiday-makers who at fashion's command crowd to overflowing the many trains going north by no means have the best of the bargain. Moreover the heat in Madrid has many compensations. The inhabitants have a special skill in ices and iced drinks, and everywhere in the evenings there are happy groups of people taking the air in wooded squares and avenues, where the grass is kept fresh and green, water being plentifully used in streets and gardens, and everywhere the air seems scented with lime and privet and heliotrope. Even the humblest streets from the beginning of August show an abundance of excellent fruit from every part of Spain, including the first long green grapes from the east coast. The museums and Government offices close early, and in the first part of the afternoon the whole of the city dies down to a gentle *siesta*. The heat appears quite powerless to reduce the Castilian to slovenliness or slouching. No one in the streets walks fast, but latent energy is observable in every gesture. The difference of temperature between shade and sun is truly amaz-

ing and affords a delicious contrast as one goes from the African fiery furnace of a treeless street into the cool of house or museum, all swept and garnished with that scrupulous love of cleanliness which is one of the marks of the Castilian. Not even the most hardened and fervent *madrileño*, who adopts as his motto, "From Madrid to heaven and in heaven a window to look down at Madrid," can, however, call Madrid heaven in July and August. But the inhabitants who have not gone away to *veranear* (and inland as well as coast towns have their complement of *veraneantes*) are far better skilled in dealing with the heat than is the passing foreigner. The Sierra de Guadarrama is now almost invisible in a heat mist, its last snows have faded and gone, and it looks very different from the lovely background, all blue and white, in Velazquez' equestrian portrait of Prince Baltasar Carlos. In July its snows suffice not to send any invigorating freshness to Madrid, and if a breath of air crosses to the city it blows from the high plains of Castille across parched and dusty stubble-fields, where the gleaners are busy in the fierce heat of the sun. Even at night or in early morning, before the ringing of the angelus, when thousands of swallows swerve across the city's roofs, the coolness is not very marked. In the streets a few one-horse hired carriages jog along at their eternal snail's pace, only waking up occasionally after following behind some very aged pedestrian without perceptibly slowing down and then suddenly

pretending to be running over him, with a great shout from the driver. On shady benches and pavements lie workmen and unemployed asleep in all kinds of sharp Goyesque attitudes. Madrid is a city of many magnificent buildings, and it has parks and gardens to match. One may walk the whole length of the city from the Atocha Station to beyond the Plaza de Colón without leaving the shade of trees, the scent of flowers, of lime-trees and oleanders, and the plashing of fountains. The well-kept Botanical Gardens provide a delightful refuge from the surrounding glare, and have a pleasant Theocritean air as the cicadas creak out their song under trees so ancient that they might almost have given shade to Cervantes (when he lived in the Calle de León not far away), through the branches of which show gaps and lakes of deep blue sky. Farther on, in the Paseo de Recoletos or the Paseo de la Castellana, little springs bubble up among plots of heliotrope. Day after day the sun sets in a glowing forge of brown and flame-coloured sky without a cloud, and it is not till well on in August that the first rains may come and the Sierra de Guadarrama begin to don its winter surplice. The air is extraordinarily subtle, and the sound of words, spoken by Castilians with characteristic distinctness, carries to a great distance. The Prado Gallery still has a few visitors even in the dog days, and from time to time one may hear a picture discussed, dismissed in a grave sentence of ringing Castilian. Titian's Salome and

Andrea del Sarto's Lucrezia gaze on in their mysterious half-smiling beauty, and the long thin figures and cold tints of El Greco never look more fresh and exquisite than seen on one of these stifling summer days.

A few weeks later, in autumn, is perhaps the best time of all to make a stay at Madrid. The last golden fingers flutter down from the chestnut-trees in the Paseo de la Castellana, and the acacia-leaves, minted into smaller change, fall in Danae showers. A flight of doves from the Biblioteca Nacional (for here, as in London, they show a passion for learning) catches the sun in the cloudless blue sky, which is reflected wonderfully in the recently-watered asphalt of this broad avenue, the buildings of which above the disrobing trees take in an autumn sunset a cold tinge of faintest purple. Much is heard of the cold of Madrid, but the days of late autumn can be as warm as those of Lisbon or Cairo, while occasionally there is a touch in the air, a spice which thrills with the unmistakable intimation of the presence of snow mountains. The Sierra de Guadarrama, already robed half-way down with a glittering surplice of snow, is invisible from most of Madrid's streets, but its presence makes itself subtly felt after the sunset, and it gives a beautiful background of white and blue to the views from the Parque del Oeste or from Moncloa, where the white violets are now in flower beneath the pines. A little later it will introduce itself more boisterously to Madrid's

inhabitants in the shape of sleet and hail and icy wind, and triumphs in late winter and early spring, mottling a clear blue day with showers of white.

These November days can be the most delightful of the Madrid year, when, as it happens from time to time, St. Martin seems to prolong his summer indefinitely, as though the warm days would never cease, and the *capa*, if worn, is opened to the sun, and the *cafés* are crowded rather from habit than from any need of warmth or shelter, and the loiterers in the Puerta del Sol find it unnecessary to choose their position with careful nicety so as to obtain all the sun and avoid the wind. One seems still to be in summer, and the full rigour of the winter season's conventions has not begun, the Teatro Real has not opened its doors, receptions and dances are not in full swing. Yet there is already a Christmas animation in the markets, the lottery offices are crowded with figures of the great Christmas lottery, the smaller fruit shops and groceries are thickly stocked with chestnuts and oranges and almonds, and hung with a green curtain of grapes, which are thus preserved till the end of the year, and donkeys with panniers of chrysanthemums go about the streets. The town is full, the *veraneantes* have returned from their holidays at the seaside or abroad, or in smaller towns of Castille, and Spaniards from the provinces have come to visit the capital and Court. Foreigners more often choose the spring, when the climate is more difficult and erratic. One cannot, of course, be certain

of a fine autumn, but if one has this good fortune, no capital city is pleasanter than Madrid in a late St. Martin's summer, before the December mists dim the streets with something of a London dinginess and close down over the black ploughlands of Castille.

It is one of the charms of Madrid that with all its modern progress, its cosmopolitanism, its magnificence, it preserves many rustic traits. Side by side with the electric trams go the slow ox-carts, the deep-toned bells round the necks of the oxen recalling upland pastures, or a cart drawn by a string of mules reminds one of the lonely dusty roads of Spain. Another charming characteristic which renders Madrid different from any other capital city is the strongly individual character of its inhabitants. However large may be the crowd it never seems to fuse into a mass, but always to be ready to break up into its component units, separate as the seeds of a pomegranate. That is, indeed, the strength and the weakness of Spain. The humblest citizen of Madrid has a lively sense of his own dignity and importance. The dustman shovels the dust into his cart with the air of a prince in disguise, and this independent, high-spirited attitude of a high-bred people is an unfailing pleasure to the foreigner. Even the born *madrileña*, the *gata* (cat), as she is called, combines with a graceful elegance a vigour which is denied to the pale Lisbon "lettuce" (*alfacinha*).

Few cities have a more energetic idleness than the capital of Spain. The thronged streets and

*cafés*, the overflowing Puerta del Sol, which, once a splendid city square, now appears shrunk and narrow, are all full of life and movement, and in the attitudes and speech of each individual one may perceive a mine of more or less explosive energy. Some of the streets, when the lamps are lit and the electric light advertisements are flashing on all sides in a passing moment of great traffic, recall the busiest streets of London. If a foreigner asks himself why all this traffic and turmoil in a city which has neither industry nor commerce, he shows that he has not understood the character of Castille and Spain. There the proper study of mankind is man; it is all a question of persons, of forms, and customs. Machinery is not in the saddle riding mankind; the Castilian would never suffer such an indignity; he prefers to ride a fine horse and be free. It is a relative freedom, for he believes in the value of rigid forms. Who will be so bold as to affirm, especially when one considers the present world chaos, that he is not justified in his belief?

There is something of a ritual about life here. In no country are the ways of society more formal; Madrid life has been described by a great Spanish novelist as methodically insipid. At certain hours and seasons you descend in your carriage to the Paseo de la Castellana and proceed in a long row, so serried that the horses of one carriage have been known to make a hasty meal of the ladies' hats in the carriage preceding; at certain hours

you go to your box at the theatre or to the bull-fight, as regularly as you go to the seaside when summer comes; and if you escape to a popular *verbena* (a fair held on the eve of certain saint-days) you will probably find that half of Madrid's society is there also, the custom of escaping having become another convention. To the philosopher they may seem frivolous and empty, these exhibitions of the human comedy, but youth and beauty in each generation bring life and gaiety into the old customs and prevent them from being dull or insipid.

Madrid is the background for the display of personal advantages and rivalries, enjoyment, social and political gossip, long *café* discussions of everything in heaven and earth, animated conversation and *jaleo*; and there is the intense conviction that life is just that: the daily show and relations between men and women. There is, no doubt, in the various ranks of society here unbending exclusiveness and bitter envy, and constant strife and ambition, but the *madrileño* who best appreciates the privilege of living in the capital and Court is he who neither hates nor despises overmuch, but is content with his daily round of *café*, theatre, bull-fight, and office hours, and confines his ambition to the desire of seeing his favourite politician in power. Richard Ford three-quarters of a century ago found Madrid "but a dear, second-rate, inhospitable city." It may be dear, but no one could now truthfully describe it as second-rate or inhospitable. The splendid buildings of new



Madrid make it one of the finest cities of Europe. Madrid, the formal, the haughty but hospitable city of the bleak, desolate plain, is full of a new life. Artificial and conventional if you will, but fascinating and progressive, worthy of a city which will soon rank as a second Vienna, the capital of a great and flourishing country. It may not be Spain—Spaniards and foreigners who only leave Madrid to travel in an express train to the frontier or to some Spanish watering-place live and die without ever knowing the real Spain—but it is certainly magnificent.

Madrid has many celebrated writers, many publishers and bookshops, libraries and learned academies, although the impression one has is never exclusively literary. Literary associations with the past abound. In this poor house in the Calle de Leon Cervantes lived, from that convent Lope de Vega's daughter looked out to see his magnificent funeral procession pass ; near the square where Calderon has his statue was another convent to which Fray Luis de Leon was wont to ride down from that of the Augustinians and tie his mule to the railings or a ring in the wall. In order to appreciate Madrid fully one must have read the old dramatists and the eighteenth-century *sainetes* of Ramon de la Cruz, without neglecting the modern Spanish novelists who have discovered that Madrid is a city of great interest and charm and beauty. There are yearly book fairs at Madrid, and treasures still fall occasionally to those who

search diligently. The Rastro has a few books among its old rags and iron, but they have no pride or privilege of place like the books along the Seine. They lie on the rough cobbles, among a motley company of keys and old coins and chains, in corded rows or fluttering heaps that recall the books awaiting the fire after the great scrutiny in Don Quixote's house. The burning sun warps the bindings, or the wind blows back the covers to display the title-page in Latin or French or Catalan, Castilian or even sonorous Basque, and perhaps a note in faded ink recording that "This book belongs to the Inquisitor Fulano de Tal," or to this or that convent of monks or nuns. Only a few of them are gathered from the street and nicely ordered on a wooden stall. Drifted hither from every part of Spain, they mostly sprawl at intervals on either side of the Ribera de Curtidores, the steeply descending street below which the brown parched treeless plain stretches away to distant blue. They are the last sufferers in a long line of book martyrdoms lasting through many centuries. To book-lovers the painful part of the scrutiny of Don Quixote's library is that "the priest tired of looking at so many books, and decreed that all the rest should be burnt indiscriminately." In real life one Spaniard of that day at least, Miguel de Cervantes, would certainly have refused to throw any book into the fire without having a good look at it first. The importation of literature into Spain was jealously watched, but occasionally agents from

Flanders or England with cargoes of heretical books were successful in eluding the vigilance of the officials, as in more recent times revolutionary books were smuggled with other articles of contraband across the Bidasoa and the Pyrenees. The delays of the Inquisition were the despair of the booksellers at Salamanca and elsewhere; we read of bales of books lying unopened, awaiting inspection. In Spain of course the Bible is not to be found in the farms and cottages. George Borrow, impertinently scattering Bibles through the remote provinces of Spain, has his humble successors who still traverse Andalucía, driving before them one or more donkeys laden with Spanish Testaments. When they have put up for the night and the asses, bearers of the sacred load, are quietly in their stalls, caring for none of these things, the peasants, if it be winter, after a frugal meal, gather round the wood fire burning on the ground at one end of the great inn kitchen. One of the men begins an impromptu sermon, into which he weaves texts from the New Testament, and it is curious to watch the various degrees of interest, mockery and courteous indifference on the faces of his listeners, lit up by the flames of the blazing fire, the rest of the kitchen being in darkness. Most of them cannot read, but they are faintly interested in books that are sold beneath cost price or even given away. The Spanish peasants are naturally intelligent, but they have no book-learning. The place of books is taken by ancient legends and proverbs and song.



SEGOVIA

A GENERAL VIEW FROM THE GRANJA ROAD



They have an instinctive culture which years of education are powerless to give. They are happier when they can say with the wise Sancho Panza, "I cannot read or write," "no sé esas filosofías, I know not those philosophies": "Ni rien ne sais, oncques lettre ne lus." The Spanish peasants in many a village where the priest represents learning and the priest's library is his breviary lead enviable lives of more varied interest and less monotony than do those who call themselves their betters. So we need feel but a momentary sorrow for the miserable books of the Rastro which lie in cold neglect among an infinity of odds and ends, and have not even that splendour in misfortune that graced their predecessors: they at least were carried in solemn procession to the fire and occupied the thoughts of Customs officials and grave inquisitors. Their descendants' lot is cast in a duller and more careless generation:

Or le bagna la pioggia e muove 'l vento.

The sun and rain yellow and age them, the wind scatters them like the leaves of the Sibyl, and perhaps occasionally some inquisitive heretic fingers their pages.

#### THE BULL-FIGHT

But it is not only in literature that one finds change and decay in the lively capital of Spain. *Les dieux s'en vont.* Belmonte, the cultured Juan Belmonte, who spends his spare time reading books, has retired from the ring, has "cut off his

pigtail" when at the height of his fame and skill. The bull-fight has suffered other serious losses: never have there been so many deaths in the arena. It was at Madrid that the Valencian Manuel Granero Vals was cruelly and fatally gored at the age of twenty. Two years earlier this promising "sword" had exchanged violin-playing for the more adventurous and lucrative sport of the arena. But one of the most tragic and sensational events in the annals of bull-fighting was the death, just two years before, of José Gomez y Ortega (Joselito), killed in the Talavera ring on May 27, 1920. He achieved fame earlier than any preceding *torero* and maintained and increased it during eight seasons, so that it was difficult to believe that the owner of a name which filled Spain and South America was only twenty-five years old when he died. If ever a bull-fighter was born, not made, it was Joselito. The son of a celebrated bull-fighter, of gipsy stock, his elder brother Rafael, older than José by some twenty years, is another famous "sword," known ordinarily as El Gallo. A third brother is also well known in the arena, and their sisters are married to bull-fighters. At the age of four Joselito is said to have been confronted with his first bull, but however that may be he made his name as a boy bull-fighter when barely in his teens, and "taking the alternative" reached the rank of *matador* and became a "sword" at Seville in 1912 at the age of seventeen, the youngest "sword" on record. The skill of the Cock-

erel (Gallito) was marvellous. The people called him José Marvels, the King, the Pope of the Ring. He seemed never to be at fault, and the art of bull-fighting had no secrets from him from his earliest years. Indeed, so extraordinary was his cleverness, so assured his mastery over the most difficult and dangerous bulls, that it seemed almost too easy. The critics paid full homage to his unsurpassed style and dexterity; they were sometimes inclined to deny the possession of courage to this spoilt child of fame and fortune. Yet he had never shirked his duties; he had been killer (*matador*) in 670 fights, establishing the record of 100 in 1915, and keeping it up in two succeeding years, and had killed over 1,500 bulls. He had been four times wounded, and his death in the small bull-ring of Talavera de la Reina (the birthplace of Mariana) proved that he must often have displayed more courage than those on the other side of the barricade were disposed to give him credit for. The bull which killed Joselito was a small and not particularly ferocious animal named "Dancer" (*Bailador*), a cross between the famous breeds of the Duke of Veragua and the Count of Santa Coloma. Joselito's supreme knowledge of his art made it almost incredible that this "sword," who was held to have eclipsed all previous "swords," should ever be killed in the arena. At the age of twenty he had already amassed a fortune of several million pesetas, and when a few weeks before his death he figured in the great Seville bull-fights,



before many thousands of Spaniards and foreigners from all parts of the world, he seemed to have another twenty years before him in which to gather in millions of pesetas and thrill myriads of spectators. For the bull-fight still holds and more than holds its own in Spain. Spectators on foot and in carriages still throng the Calle de Alcalá on their way to Madrid's arena once or twice a week throughout the summer. At Seville a new arena has been built capable of seating nearly twice as many persons as the old ring which had room for "only" 14,000. Barcelona has three arenas, of which the largest holds 30,000 spectators. And the bull-fight has shown signs of creeping into France and Italy. Other nations engage in brutal sports, but criticism has naturally fastened on the magnificent spectacle of the bull-fight where the cruelty is witnessed by thousands in the full light of the sun, just as it fastened on the splendid awe-inspiring show of the *auto de fé*, although the number of those actually burnt were very few. Brutal as is the carnage of old horses in the bull-fight, and one thinks avoidable, of the bull-fight as a whole one would rather say that life is brutal and the Spaniard sincere. It is the national sport of the Spanish people, an ancient tradition which is one of the few things that remain unchanged, ancient even in the sixteenth century,<sup>1</sup> when Santa Teresa, going by night to found one of her convents of

<sup>1</sup> "Una muy antigua y general costumbre en estos nuestros reynos." said Philip II.

Barefoot Carmelites, met the bulls being driven in for next day's fight. But in one respect the bull-fight has changed, for, whereas in old days men mounted on noble steeds attacked the bull with their lances, the *suerte de pica* is now performed by men on the sorriest hacks, bought cheap and liberally sacrificed. It is this traffic in old horses which every one wishes to get rid of, representing, as it does, the sordid side of an otherwise magnificent show. An article published by the well-known Spanish newspaper "A.B.C." recently contained the following sentence: "The *suerte de pica* must be suppressed before another year is out." "Very well," says the ignorant foreigner, "we are interested chiefly in the bull and the men; by all means do away with the horses." But it is not quite so simple as that. The bull's neck has to be bowed and humbled so as to receive the final sword-thrust of the *matador*, who would have no chance with a stiff-necked opponent. The question, therefore, is whether the end in view could not be attained by allowing the bull to charge, but having men to stop its charge with their long pikes; they would be mounted on good and well-protected horses, which it would be considered a disgrace for their riders to permit the bull's horns to wound.

At present the new sensibility of the spectators is to be catered for by throwing a cloth over the dead and mangled horses; but this is mere mockery, a device worthy of a more hypocritical people, unworthy of the Spain which has always shown

such courage in looking life and reality unflinchingly in the face. The problem will have to be dealt with more fundamentally if the bull-fight is to survive. Already the stiff picadors riding down the Calle de Alcalá among the motor-cars after a bull-fight seem a strange anachronism.

Another fact which may deal a severe blow to the popularity of the bull-fight is that, just as the division of two great parties into groups has brought such perplexity to Spanish politics, the old dualism which divided Spain into followers of Lagartijo and Frascuelo, and later of Bombita and Machaquito, and later again of Belmonte and Joselito, would seem to have disappeared. After Joselito's tragic death Belmonte reigned supreme, but no one took the vacant place. Sanchez Megias is an excellent *matador*, Rosita a promising youth, Chicuelo skilful but unequal: there is a galaxy of names, but no one has yet appeared who can catch the popular imagination and contest Belmonte's superiority. Nevertheless, it would be rash to infer that the bull-fight is on its last legs. Perhaps it is just as well that it is not. The bull-fight is a splendid sight, a magnificent tradition; it keeps thousands more or less harmlessly occupied for hours every holiday; it is a bond of common interest and a school of courage and skill. It is idle for those who complain of its cruelty—the cruelty inherent in all sport—to think that mere words will end it. That is the too frequent error of revolutionaries, to destroy instead of building. If the opponents of

the bull-fight are sincere, they must put their hands in their purses and replace the bull-fight by something else of absorbing interest for a huge audience. Cricket will perhaps never become popular in Latin countries; the day of the open-air drama has not yet come; football, which can now attract a considerable crowd at Madrid or Barcelona, is not a summer game. But there is no reason why the game of pelota, to which the Basques largely owe their gracefulness and agility, should not be extended throughout Spain. It must, of course, be played in large open courts, surrounded by tiers of seats for the spectators, as in the Basque villages. It is for those who object to the bull-fight to build such courts in the great cities of Spain.

### ESCORIAL

It has become a convention for travellers to find the Escorial a gloomy and repellent building, the proper abode for Philip II, the fanatic. They have some excuse, for it is only quite recently that Philip II has begun to appear in his true light from out the persistent falsifications of the historians, and to see him as he really was is perhaps a necessary preliminary to seeing the Escorial as it really is—a building of unrivalled rhythm and harmony and exquisite proportions. Perhaps it is not exaggeration to say that no one who cannot feel the beauty and the rightness of the Escorial can understand Castille, and certainly no one who fails to appreciate Castille will have any real understanding of Spain.

The fact is that the Escorial building, vast as it is, is a place not for show merely, it is a practical building pleasant to live in, especially in summer. The whole village, or group of houses near the convent, is then delightful. The bells of slow ox-carts sound drowsily under the avenues of plane or acacia, as they must have sounded when in teams of twenty and more yokes they dragged up the great blocks for the construction of this mighty edifice, which was only completed in twenty years (1563-84). In the gardens sing the nightingales to which Philip II loved to listen, and down the steep mountain side comes a wind laden with the scent of cystus and thyme, while the western horizon below is at sunset charged with forge-like splendours across the brown and purple plain. The mountain side is thickly scented with cystus and young pine-trees, and a subtle wind sways the long parched yellow grasses under the pines. A huge copper-coloured moon rises slowly from the valley. And a little lower down on the mountain side, a mass of slate and grey stone, stands the many-windowed convent. Really complete appreciation of the Escorial, as of Castille, is scarcely to be acquired in a single brief visit. The Castilian is too proud to advertise the excellence of his native land. Even now, when many noble tributes have been paid in Spanish to the beauty and interest of Castille, it will be found that they are mostly the work of writers who are not Castilians, of Don Miguel de Unamuno and Don Pío Baroja, who are

Basques, of Don Ricardo León and Don Antonio Machado, who are Andalusians, of Pérez Galdós, a native of the Canary Islands, Don Enrique Larreta, a South American, or "Azorín" (the pseudonym of Don José Martínez Ruiz), who is of the east coast of Spain. Castille absorbs and assimilates (the most Castilian of Spain's painters were likewise not Castilian by birth), but does not go out of its way to woo the foreigner. And in the same way these towns and buildings seem to say to the passing traveller, "I am I, go on your way if you can't appreciate my merits; it is nothing to me." The following lines were written after a first visit to El Escorial, when prejudices still lay thick about the writer:—"There is something austere and discomfortable about the place. A harsh unmusical angelus is presently answered by another, equally harsh. The very crickets seem to have exchanged their blithe idyllic creaking for a long continuous wail of souls in torment, and although the heavens are bare the moon scarcely dares look round her with delight. The spirit of Philip II floats round the great dome of the Escorial church like an industrious bat in the twilight. Looking down at the vast massive granite monastery, one realizes that three hundred years are but a day and a night and that three thousand years must pass before this building, this *sierra*, one had almost said, can begin to feel the effects of time." That is a good instance of the advantages to be derived from repeated visits to and long study of Spain, for

those words to-day seem wholly meaningless, with an utter incapacity to understand the intense charm and serenity of the place. It may be that the royal Pantheon is not very gay; no more is the cellar of an ordinary house (unless it is delicately stocked, and inhabited by Athos). But there is nothing gloomy about the charming rooms in which King Philip lived and died, looking on the one side across the church to the high altar and on the other on the box-hedges of the gardens. They give that rhythmic sense of proportion which characterizes the whole building, and the light from a great wood-fire would of old throw comfortable gleams over the austere but beautiful and solid furniture and the books and pictures along the walls. To-day the most delightful room in this convent (now inhabited by Augustinians) which still has some of the world's most beautiful pictures, is the reading room of the library, with its comfortable old-fashioned chairs of leather, immediately beneath the *sierra*. Between El Escorial and Ávila is a country thickly wooded with pines, wholly different from the idea habitually formed by foreigners and even by many Spaniards of Castille. An ox-cart groans along the narrow white road that winds between dense hills of pine, and beyond are more pine-hills, and, beyond those, beautiful ranges of blue and purple mountains. A scarlet-skirted woman is seated in the empty ox-cart, and a man walks by its side. No house and no other living thing is visible far or near. The

Escorial is built of grey gleaming granite from the side of Guadarrama and of slate brought from Toledo. Its marbles came from Cuenca and many other Spanish quarries. Its doors and drawers and *azulejo* shelves are all massive and lasting, beautiful in their severe simplicity.

## TOLEDO

As he crosses the noble Bridge of Alcántara, Toledo, like one of its famous magicians of old, seizes each visitor and transforms and transports him into a distant past. The centuries fall away. Toledo to-day is full of life and very prosperous ; but it might be the abode of all the millionaires of America or the meeting-place for the League of Nations and would remain Toledo unless some violent upheaval destroyed the steep hill above the Tagus and the city with it. The dramatist Tirso de Molina at the beginning of the seventeenth century protested against its narrow Moorish streets, so different from the broad open streets of a really Castilian town. The Moors, he said, have "spoilt part of the beauty of our Toledo by their miserly buildings and narrow streets leading nowhere." They are still there, these narrow slits through rows of tall massive houses, so that one thinks not of the twentieth century but of the eleventh, when the Cid rode into the city after spending the night in the castle of San Servando, the splendid ruins of which across the river stand so nobly on its bare hill covered with dwarf asphodels. Or at most one thinks of the sixteenth-century Toledo that



Cervantes knew so well, which centred and centres in the Zocodover, when El Greco studied and painted and quarrelled with his ecclesiastical patrons, and looked out from his house on the edge of the city high above the Tagus to the harsh lines and curious tints of the surrounding country. It is not the gay Toledo of Tirso de Molina's *Cigarrales de Toledo* (1624), with lights and festivals and courtiers, that remains, but rather that of the beginning of the sixteenth century, the Toledo of the "Escudero" of *Lazarillo de Tormes*, the poor squire from Valladolid who lived in a great empty house (without so much as a towel to dry his hands on). It seemed like a dungeon as one entered, and for his sustenance he had but a jar of water and the scraps that Lazarillo was able to gather together, but in the street he appeared faultlessly dressed, wearing his cloak and his sword with a lordly air. Who to see him could have imagined that he had spent the whole of the previous day in involuntary fast? Only the kindly "hilanderas" who lived next door might have some suspicions. No one came to the house. Occasionally a funeral passed its gloomy doorway. One day a man and a woman came; the man demanded the rent, the woman the amount due for the hire of the only bed in the house. So the squire went out to change a gold coin in order to pay them, and returned no more. Toledo is so built above the river that it has a chance of preserving longer than other cities those narrow streets with the silent houses, in one of which the penniless

squire, noble and dignified, lived his double life of pride in the street and starvation indoors. But Toledo is a city of splendour as well as of poverty ; the city of El Greco where in the last quarter of the sixteenth century the immortal Theotocopuli worked at his masterpieces. The charming Casa del Greco, furnished by the Marquis de Vega Inclán as it might have been in the sixteenth century, now preserves many of his pictures, but some of the greatest of them are only to be seen at certain hours in Toledo's churches. It is well, at Toledo as elsewhere, to have a definite purpose and to keep one's eyes open by the way as one pursues it ; thus even if the purpose is not attained one will have gained ample compensations in its pursuit in this land so rich in interest and surprises, human and artistic. At Toledo such a purpose may be almost endlessly varied : it may be historical, through literature or architecture ; or literary, through the scenes in " La Ilustre Fregona," the Posada de la Sangre, where Cervantes stayed, the Zocodover where the Arabic MS. of " Don Quixote " was purchased (for it is well known that the Spanish text is but a translation), and a hundred similar memories ; or artistic, in an El Greco pilgrimage. His pictures are everywhere, in the Museum, in the Casa del Greco and the neighbouring church of San Tomé, in the cathedral, in other churches scattered through the city and in the Hospital de Afuera outside ; so that incidentally one sees the whole city on one's way. San Tomé has but one

picture, the "Entierro del Conde Orgaz," but it is one which requires as much time to itself as is usually given to the whole of Toledo by those who rush down from Madrid to spend half a day there. The sudden hurry of idle people on these occasions is remarkable. And then there is the excellent luncheon at the pleasant Fonda de Castilla to take an hour of one's time! The mountaineering to be done in these steep cobbled streets gives one a good appetite.

What is "The Secret of Toledo," which M. Maurice Barrès so confidently made the sub-title of one of his books? Its appeal can scarcely be said to lie in sheer beauty. To speak of Toledo's beauty at all, and, of course, it has great beauty, is a comparatively modern fashion. In the eighteenth century Henry Swinburne described it as "exceedingly ill built, poor, and ugly," and very reasonably pointed out that "its streets are so steep that no stranger in his sober senses would venture up or down them in a carriage." A few years later an anonymous English writer, influenced no doubt by Swinburne's book ("Travels through Spain," 2 vols., 1787) declares that "nothing can surpass the gloomy dullness of Toledo" and speaks of its "dreary streets."

The intense cult of Toledo began or revived with that of El Greco, and in future they will not easily be divided. The fascination of Toledo increases steadily, it grows on one like that of the pictures of El Greco. It is quite conceivable that

to a passing traveller in a hurry both the city and the pictures might convey an impression of positive ugliness; but like the pictures the city seems always able to provide some new and unexpected attraction. Toledo has character, a certain austerity which enables it to keep a strong hold on its admirers, whom it refuses to woo with meretricious charms. Its emblem is the sword, and it is curious that the abbreviation of the city's name found in old documents and inscriptions (a capital T with a small o over it) exactly represents a sword. It is fitting that its chief products should be the famous swords of its factory, and that upwards of a thousand military cadets in their pleasant grey uniform grace its streets. Like a few others of the world's most favoured cities, such as Florence and Seville, Toledo affords in a small space a marvellous variety of interest and beauty. Almost every square yard is a paradise to the artist and antiquarian. Here, as one enters what might almost be a tumbledown farm, the charming white pillars and arches of Santa María la Blanca carry one back to the time of the Moors. A little further on the treasures of the churches of Santo Tomé or San Vicente, or the house and museum of El Greco delight the admirers of the great Cretan artist, who spent the last forty years of his life here. Or the Posada de la Sangre, just below the Zocodover, most famous of the squares of ancient cities, preserves a *patio* of rough pillars and cobbles which might well be or resemble that in which Cervantes no

doubt often sat sheltering from the heat and watching the life of the place. Beyond the river almond trees and pomegranates stand in the stony harsh-coloured soil of the Cicarrales, and the beautiful ruin of San Servando brings back the mighty figure of the Cid, as the Gothic cathedral, in its pride and splendour, recalls a series of Cardinals, Primates, and Archbishops who virtually ruled Spain, while the Alcazar overflows with the life and vigour of a new generation.

Municipal progress cannot touch Toledo, since its steep, narrow, curving, irregular streets, with their quaint ancient names and houses of stone or brick decked with geraniums and carnations, scarcely admit of motor cars or tramways; but, more interesting than asphalt or rubber tyres, it preserves, as in geological strata, the memories of a noble past, which must ever be an incentive to future generations. It is the home of high breeding and democratic manners, that aristocratic democracy which is characteristic of Spain.

#### THE INNS OF SPAIN

Cervantes lovers will be glad to know that the celebrated Posada de la Sangre at Toledo, which was in danger of being pulled down or altered, has now become a national monument. It is but an inn; yet were Spanish inns, too often the butt of travellers' wit, to become a thing of the past, a great link with the Spain of the sixteenth century and with "Don Quixote" would be lost. Many of the scenes in "Don Quixote" occur in Spanish

inns, and Cervantes' descriptions are constantly reproduced for the modern traveller in the real life of to-day. The ideal must now be that the inns should retain all their original and characteristic features—the *patio* (court), the great kitchen fire, the giant wineskins, the porous earthenware water jars—while adapting themselves to some extent to the requirements of the modern motorist. They should, at least, be able to produce hot meals, so often lukewarm in the better *hôtels*, and some of the excellent native dishes.

The ideal for the inn is not to become an *hôtel*, but to become a good inn. Cervantes, who, as itinerant tax-gatherer in Andalucía, was, like Don Quixote, a “pilgrim from inn to inn,” wrote with feeling in describing the “limited inn-dinner” or the “accursed trestle-bed.” Anyone who will may suffer the same to-day and, what is more, enjoy it. The inns, if uncomfortable, are clean, and the characters of mine host and of his guests who gather round the great hearth are compensation for some minor discomforts. A sixteenth-century humanist, travelling to Portugal, recounts his experiences at an inn on the banks of the Tagus. “What shall we have for supper, good hostess?”—“There is nothing,” she said. The luckless traveller, accustomed to the comfort and plenty of Flanders, resolved to act on the motto, *Qui dort dine*, and asked to be shown to his bed, but, “There is no bed,” she said. At many Spanish inns to-day clean beds and good food are to be had. The fact that a

traveller, after a long tramp or ride through thinly populated country, may find no dinner at a village inn is the direct result of a law passed by the Catholic Kings, Ferdinand and Isabella, long before the days of Queen Elizabeth. Inasmuch as the inn-keepers were thieves and robbers a Royal decree enacted that they should provide service only. It is to be feared that modern travellers are not more grateful than was Don Quixote, and especially Sancho, for this paternal protection of their purse at the expense of their person, by which they are occasionally at risk of faring as ill as the ingenious gentleman and his squire who "breakfasted, lunched, dined, and supped at one and the same moment."

But every painter should be obliged to spend several weeks in Spanish inns as part of his education. A party of muleteers, *arrieros* or *carreteros*, cooking their meal in the inn, is a sight delightful and unforgettable. The fire, often in the centre of the floor, is of broom or whin or heather, and as it breaks partially into a blaze it crimsons and illumines one or another of the faces of the men standing or sitting round it or bending over the black pots and cauldrons, and the scene brings to mind the colours and expressions of many a great master, Flemish and Spanish. The dress of these peasants is often blue and black, with gay-coloured plaids (*mantas*) over their shoulders; but the interest is in their pleasant, strong-featured, thin, wrinkled, handsome faces, lit up every now and then by the flames in Rembrandt hues.

## TWO POETS OF CASTILLE

Don Antonio Machado, one of the most prominent of the Spanish poets of the day, is by birth an Andalusian, but some of his finest verse is devoted to Castille, and one of his volumes bears the title "Campos de Castilla" (1912). He describes the country about Soria: dark oak-crowned hills on the horizon, sheep and bulls, bare rocks, a line of elms along the river. It is a "land noble and sad, of high plains and rocks and wildernesses, of fields unploughed, without streams or trees, of dead cities, roads with no inns, and amazed peasants without dance or song, leaving their silent homes to go, like the rivers, seaward." Clearly it is not his native land, this Castille of which he says that "victorious yesterday, now wretched, wrapped in rags, she despises whatever falls outside her knowledge." But, as he also remembers, it is Castille that made Spain, "Castille, the gloomy, manly land, disdainful of her fate, the land of pain and war, the land of death and yet immortal," "mystic, warrior Castille, humble, gracious, fierce, disdainful, and strong," where although "spring may be long in coming it is so sweet and lovely when it comes." "The land of Soria is cold and dry. Over its hills and bare mountains, little green meadows, ashen-grey ridges, Spring passes, leaving its tiny white daisies among the scented grass. The soil does not revive, the country dreams, and at the beginning of April Moncayo's flanks are still covered with snow. The wayfarer passes; neck and mouth wrapped in his scarf, and shepherds in their long cloaks."



The patches of ploughland are like pieces of brown serge, the poplars are beginning to show green along the distant high road, and in nooks and gullies hawthorn and violets flower. Figures riding along on brown donkeys are outlined against the sky. At the beginning of autumn the oxen plough slowly up a hill; hanging between them from the yoke is a cradle of reeds and broom, the mother walks behind scattering the grain. Then the snow comes in whirlwinds and settles on field and road, and by the fire a girl thinks of the days of blue and gold when the white daisies grow in the meadows. The Andalusian poet has lived in Castille, and has felt its charm. It is a fascination which is not immediate, but once undergone is not lightly shaken off and abides in memory.

Don Enrique de Mesa is less subjective than Señor Machado. His poems in "Cancionero Castellano" have caught something of the simplicity of the popular quatrains or the Castilian *romances* :—

My song is of simple  
Indigenous mould,  
A coin that reflects  
Castille's glories of old.

or

A shepherd-boy in sandals  
Along this pathway went,  
Its margins are so green, so green,  
With flowers white besprent.

He draws his inspiration from the high passes of the Sierra de Guadarrama: the mountain stream of Peñalara merry with the melted snow and its

crystal songs; the royal cloak of pines hanging from the mountain's shoulders, its granite peaks, the sound of the wind in the pines, the rocks and snows, and subtle treacherous winter winds of the *sierra*, the wilderness of thyme :

Clear Spring, all the sun's laughter  
Is in thy water blent,  
Thyme-fields wherein the happy winds  
Have clothed themselves with scent.

Or it is the " sad brown country of ancient villages, filled with glorious memories." " The plain sleeps beneath the sun with no green to cheer it, austere in its colour like a Franciscan's frock." Not a stream, not a bird ; only the sound of the crickets, and a flock of sheep travelling slowly in a cloud of dust. In August the land is silent, the paths have lost their flowers, the green wheat and the poppies have vanished, and the high-lying plain is an infinite expanse of yellow stubble, where the task of threshing goes on incessantly, while the mills sing their song as they grind out the golden corn.

#### CASTILLIAN VILLAGES

Most travellers in Spain know those villages, mere huddled clusters of houses that are the colour of the soil, and perhaps as they pass they take as little interest in them as in the *paramera*, ploughed or rocky upland, from which at a few hundred yards they are not easily distinguished. But if you have the wisdom to travel in the same railway carriage as the peasants your interest is at once quickened. How, you ask, can these splendid men

and women, clean, gay, good-looking, come from such hovels? If, however, you go into one of these villages in some fiery noonday you find that life there is not so intolerable after all. The houses are mostly clean and bare, and fairly large, they are kept miraculously cool, and provide delicious cold water out of great porous jars of earthenware. A good meal, too, you may have, not indeed when you wish but at the appointed hour, for all things here are ruled by the unchanging custom of centuries; excellent wheaten bread, wine, eggs, bacon, beans, potatoes, coffee. The peasants work hard and know how to enjoy themselves. They treat the stranger with kingly courtesy, and all the dignity of a Castilian *hidalgo*.

Some ten miles south of Ávila the village of Riofrio de Ávila lies at the entrance of a deep mountain gully. A century ago it had some five hundred inhabitants, and it has been described for us by its priest in an eighteenth-century book unearthed by "Azorín's" keen zest for ancient vanished charming things. In "Un Pueblecito" he reprints the priest's account of the village, and tells us about its author. He was an enlightened man of literary tastes, but condemned to the life of a parish priest, and without money to buy the books that would have prevented time from hanging heavily on his hands. For conversation, in the winter gatherings round the fire of ash, elm, or oak, he had the barber, who was also the doctor and surgeon, a village advocate, the sacristan, and

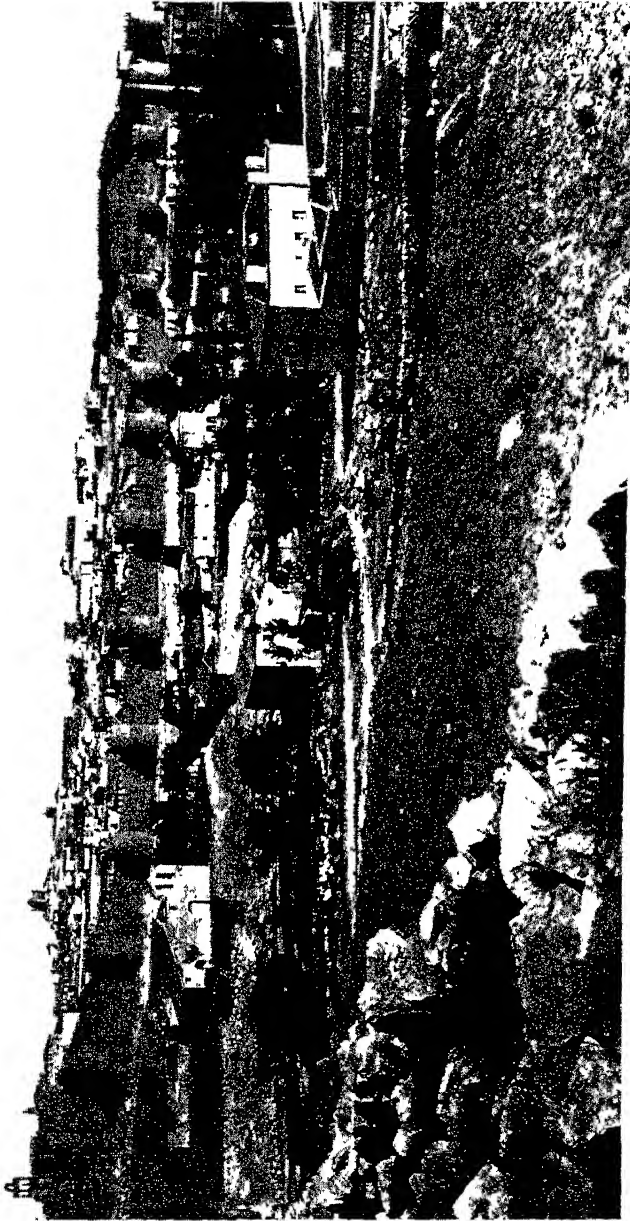
a few labourers or shepherds. Fortunately, he preferred great cold to heat, but if he had eight months of *invierno* the remaining four, from June to October, were for him *inferno*, during which only the fear of the vipers abounding in those parts prevented him from taking a plunge in the crystalline pools of the neighbouring mountain streams. His flock did not share his love of water. It never passed their lips nor touched their persons, and they were astonished to see the priest drink a glass of water of a morning. "I think that many of the illnesses here are due to a lack of cleanliness," he says. Indeed, the good priest's life in this place seems to have been a kind of mediæval dispute between water and wine. He delighted in the excellent mountain water, his parishioners paid devoted homage to wine. "They are great eaters," he says, "they drink much wine."

The village tailor spoke up in one of their meetings, and, like a good democrat, was of opinion that inasmuch as the priest had expelled certain persons in a merry condition from the parish church, they should expel the priest from the parish. As he remarks, they were great lovers of liberty; but they were dead to progress, and drank as their fathers had drunk before them, and because the only alternative to wine was water. After listening to a particularly eloquent sermon of the priest on the subject of drunkenness they would adjourn to the tavern to discuss it over the flowing bowl. The energy of these peasants, utterly indolent so

far as progress was concerned, exhibited itself in much conversation. The fact is that they were contented with their lot, and a Castilian must have his heart in a matter if his energy is to find expression in more than words. "The Spanish genius," this priest acutely noted, "is suited to whatever it undertakes, being of a superior, not an indolent nature."

#### THROUGH LA MANCHA

Those who, going from Madrid to Valencia or Alicante, take one of those excellent express trains that now traverse Spain have little other recollection than of a wide bleak plain, and then, perhaps, of white dry riverbeds crowded with the glowing pink of oleanders, and then the fertile green of the plain along the coast. But they miss much that is of interest on the way. There are cooler regions than La Mancha in August, but the spaciousness of the plain and the cloudless sky that envelops it have a potent charm. La Mancha forms part of New Castille, but has a character of its own. One notices, too, the number of Valencians, and at harvest time reapers come up not from Galicia, but from Murcia. After Villasequilla, well named as it basks drily in summer amid the dust of threshing-floors, the soil reddens, with vines which after the wheat has lost its green, furnish Castille with its principal note of freshness and produce celebrated white wines. Sometimes a whole vineyard, beneath bare brown hills, has been stripped bare of leaves by the locusts, and the great bunches of green



ÁVILA

A PANORAMA, SHOWING THE CITY WALL, WHICH CONTAINS 29 TOWERS AND 12 GATES



grapes hang round the thick stocks which are but about a foot high. Between Ananquez and Alcazar de San Juan the rich reds and browns of the soil, the pale gold of stubblefields and the turquoise sky, form a curiously beautiful and original colour scheme. At wide intervals there are great farms, called *casas de campo* (country-houses), resembling the *cortijos* of Andalucía, but without their whiteness. The roads for their part, treeless, hedgeless, ditchless, are of a startling whiteness as they pick their way through stubble and ploughland. There are now few wayfarers either riding or on foot, but mule-carts with their round awnings pass slowly, often laden with great barrels of wine, and from time to time a man sitting sideways on a donkey jogs slowly along as in the golden days of Sancho Panza. They seem golden to us although Cervantes was careful to emphasize the calamitous character of those times. Or perhaps a country doctor passes in his comfortable *jardinera* (a light wagonette differing from a *tartana* in that it is drawn not by one but by two mules and has a flat, not rounded awning). Alcazar de San Juan is an ancient town passed of old by those who went journeying to Granada and now flourishing as a centre of corn and wine. The roads that lead from it are entirely shadeless. That to Puerto Lapiche has no shade but that of thistles and telegraph posts, and very occasionally a clump of olives near the road, their silvery grey leaves etched against the luminous turquoise of the cloudless sky. Every



now and then the wind, the subtle scarcely perceptible wind almost always present in these shelterless uplands, takes the little dust left on the road and whirls it into a fantastic pillar of cloud capable of concealing a whole army from Don Quixote's sight.

¿ Ves aquella polvareda que allí se levanta, Sancho ? Pues toda es cuajada de un copiosísimo ejército, que de diversas e innumerables gentes por allí viene marchando. A esa cuenta dos deben de ser, dijo Sancho, porque de esta parte contraria se levanta así mismo otra semejante polvareda. Volvió a mirarlo Don Quixote y vió que así era la verdad, y alegrándose sobremanera pensó sin duda alguna que eran dos ejércitos que venian a embestirse y a encontrarse en mitad de aquella espaciosa llanura. . . .

A league from Alcazar the road ascends, and on all sides lies the treeless undivided plain, brown and purple and green, to the distant but distinct horizon of blue hills. Puerto Lapiche is a little village of low houses on the main road from Madrid to Jaen, flanked on either side by a range of hills beautifully outlined on the morning and evening skies. Although it lies on the main road it is only to be reached on foot or in a private carriage, twelve kilometres from the little town of Herencia, half way to Alcazar, and ten kilometres from Villarta de San Juan. The humblest inhabitant knows the names, at least, of Don Quixote and Cervantes, and they are very proud of the ruined inn where the Ingenious Knight is supposed to have met with some of his earliest

adventures. The present inn of Puerto Lapiche is delightfully clean and primitive. The cobbled court has its small deep well with whitewashed edge (*brocal*), and a bucket ready to be let down by a cord into the depths, which furnish an unfailing supply of excellent cold water. Round the court runs a rough arcade or penthouse, the roof of tiles supported on pillars of girth so huge that one could not put one's arms round them. At one side of the court stand grey *botijos*, water-jars of porous earthenware, for the thirsty wayfarer. By three o'clock on a summer morning the village is astir, as work in the vines and wheat and fruit-trees of the surrounding country must be done before the sun's heat becomes intolerable, and the mule-carts go out invisible in the darkness, creaking along the dusty road. That is the only sound to be heard under the stars in those exquisite early hours of the long July days, when the air is like a draught of amber wine, and the first light in the sky cuts hills and fruit-trees sharply as with a chisel. Presently, from where some dark-blue hills and straggling almond-trees are thus cut out against the saffron sky of dawn, will come a faint tinkling from the many bells of a hidden flock of sheep or goats, probably a herd of goats being driven slowly down to Puerto Lapiche to be milked. A white *casa de campo* to the left of the road is really one great dovecote, a *palomar* harbouring thousands of doves, chiefly valuable for the manure, of which this *palomar* alone is said to sell ten thousand *reales* (the Spanish

*real* is slightly over twopence ; it is the same name as the unit of Portuguese *réis*, but is now nearly a thousand times more valuable). A *peón caminero* (the official roadmender, paid and housed by the State) was going out to his work at four o'clock, intending to return to the shade of his house some two hours before noon ; a man of refined features and speech and manners, tall and thin and grave, and, as one had sadly to confess, as unlike Sancho Panza as anyone could be. His home, Villarubia de los Ojos de Guadiana, lay a little to the right. It is at Los Ojos de Guadiana that the river Guadiana, which rises in the Ruidera lakes near Don Quixote's Cave of Montesinos, reappears after travelling underground. The only other wayfarer was a little sad-faced man, all yellow-brown, small *béret*, wrinkled face, crumpled clothes of corduroy, leggings and leathern *abarcas*, all of the same colour, going to work for hire in the vines. Villarta de San Juan is a large village of whitewashed houses. There seems to be a perfect rivalry in cleanliness, not a speck of dust is to be seen in house or court ; at six o'clock in the morning silent black-kerchiefed women (the kerchief in Castille completely covers the hair and falls down behind), are to be seen sweeping the cobbled courts, bent double over their handleless brooms. The goats are now driven from door to door to be milked, and from time to time a slow prolonged chant, of a strange sadness, recalling the chanting of choristers in a Spanish cathedral, is heard in the deserted streets. It is the cry of

two or three small children carrying on their arm flat baskets of fritters, which are eaten as *desayuno* with the goat's milk. They may make a peseta or more in a day, but must go up and down the street (the main road) till their baskets are empty. The goats are driven back into the fields, the labourers have long since all gone away to their work and still the slow chant, *Buñuel-i-tos* continues at intervals, the only sound in the silent village. For as the summer day advances a great silence descends, even the sparrows, which haunt the acacias along the road's cobbled side-pavement, become silent; only from time to time a mule-cart rumbles in with a load of corn, a white wooden two-pronged fork projecting in front. Only the swallows rejoice in the heat and whirl in mad races above the snowily whitewashed houses. The inn, like the houses of Villarta, is scrupulously clean. On the right as one enters its court through the great nail-studded door from the high-road, is a little well, with icy water brought from a great depth. From the court steps go down into the whitewashed kitchen with a chimney at either end; one is that of the oven used for baking bread, beneath the other vine-twigs flare round a tripod on which a saucepan is placed, and, these twigs giving out a great heat, cooking proceeds apace. By the ashes lie scissor-shaped tongs, *tenazas*. Between the two chimneys is a narrow trough for kneading bread. Everywhere one may notice an economy of wood in this treeless country: the brooms are all without handles; not logs but

twigs, stalks and straw are used for fuel, the thick layer of ashes lies high round the earthenware pots and can easily be blown into a glowing heat ; this kitchen had indeed a few rough wooden shelves, but many of the doorways have no doors but simply curtains of matting, and for shutters there are blinds made of straw behind the iron *rejas*. The same economy of wood marks also "La Diaria" (The Daily), which plies daily, as its name implies, between Villarta and Cinco Casas, a small station on the railway which now runs to Don Quixote's birthplace. This Daily, or Dilly, is nothing but a mule-cart, and it takes four hours to cover just over ten miles (eighteen kilometres) of rough and shadeless road. It has two high wheels of very slender spokes and narrow tyres ; the sides of the cart are of iron rods covered with matting, the awning is of cloth spread over reeds. Two rough planks along either side form the seats and three even rougher planks the floor, hung on chains and swinging with the motion of the cart. The dog is chained underneath. A gun is hung along one side of the awning, and on the other side hangs the felt hat of the owner and driver of the cart, who is also the owner of the inn. A little *botijo* of water is hung outside in a sack of matting. Such is the never-to-be-forgotten Daily, which carries the letters and an occasional passenger from Villarta de San Juan to Cinco Casas. The scenery is typically Manchegan. The narrow road stretches away for leagues without a turning through an appar-

ently limitless plain of grey thyme and grey-green *encinas* (evergreen oaks), with distant horizons of clear blue mountains.

#### DON QUIXOTE'S BIRTHPLACE

If the Ingenious Knight ever returns to his native Argamasilla there will surely be mighty adventures. He would find there many strange inventions. He would be puzzled by the look of a telephone, and would have a word to say to the telegraph posts. The principal room of the casino, the lower part of which is a theatre, he would find skilfully decorated with scenes from his own former adventures, scenes in which windmills occupy a prominent place.

Argamasilla de Alba is a large village of low white-washed houses. The walls outside and in are white-washed continually till they gleam like snow, and their rough cobbled courts are swept carefully every morning by the women bending over their brooms. By the edge of the deep well, or cut out clearly along the snowy walls, are many flowers, chiefly red geraniums and carnations, and sometimes vines.

All this would no doubt be familiar to Don Quixote, who would find little changed in the ordinary life of the peasant who tills the soil and gathers in the grain. Priest and barber and apothecary, too, he would find as of old, and many a housewife ready to deal sternly with a library such as that of Don Quixote, if so well-stocked a library exists in Arga-

masilla to-day. But presently there is to be an aerodrome at Argamasilla, and the Ingenious Gentleman will thus have occasion to outdo his adventure with the windmills, which are now disappearing and are rarely to be seen at work, although a small army of them stands on the hill above Criptana. At Argamasilla, as at Puerto Lapiche, everyone knows at least the names of Cervantes and Don Quixote. The inhabitants answer readily enough to questions about the former, and show you the subterranean cave in which tradition says that he was imprisoned, and which is now No. 9 in the Calle de Cervantes.

As to questions about Don Quixote, they are apt to be a trifle shy and do not seem to be quite sure whether you think that they think that he ever existed. As the peasants of these parts are mostly not without a share of Sancho Panza's shrewdness and malicious humour, they do not relish having their leg pulled in this matter or having a literary fiction imposed on them as a living person. Most of the peasants are too thin and fine-featured to make an ideal squire for the knight, but from time to time one comes upon some mute, inglorious Sancho, indeed, more inglorious than mute, riding along perched on the very tail of his ass or standing by a well in the rare and delicious shade of trees. The roads are, of course, far more deserted to-day than in Cervantes' time, and one may go along them many a league and meet scarcely one person.

Argamasilla has for the last eight years possessed

a railway station, and, pending the arrival of the airplanes, this would no doubt be to-day the scene of one of Don Quixote's most stupendous adventures. How the Knight of the Sorrowful Countenance would hack and slash at the terrible engine; how the monster would hiss and snort, till at length with a shriek of dismay, it begins to flee from his invincible arm, leaving him happy and exhausted, while Sancho, who has watched the mortal combat from a place of safety, creeps out to exult in his master's success and insult the retreating enemy.

#### CUENCA

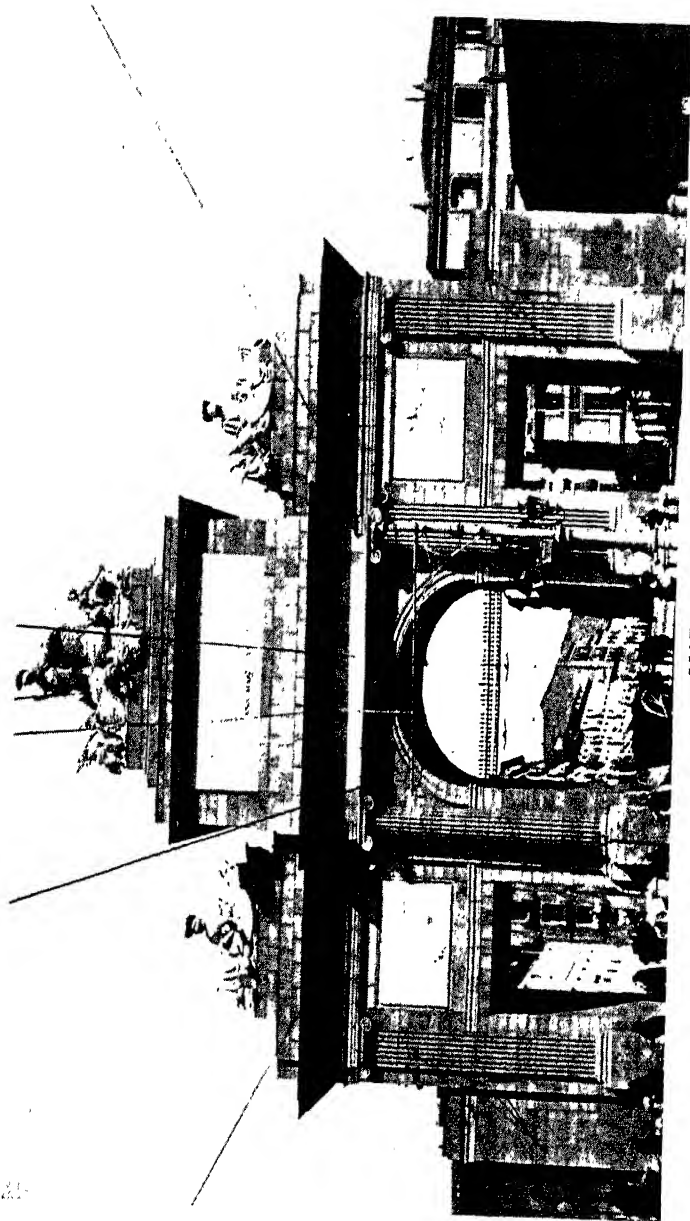
Cuenca, on a narrow hill 3,000 ft. above sea-level, is crushed into a deep gorge formed by the rivers Jucar and Huecar, and surrounded by the thyme-scented boulder-strewn Serranía de Cuenca. The old town seen from across the Jucar is wonderfully picturesque, in situation although not in ancient buildings a second Toledo. It is well provided with fruits from the fertile valley of the river, along which the splendid glossy poplars, although as tall as poplars may be—they just do not touch the bridge of San Pablo, which is 130 ft. high—appear but ninepins against the sheer cliff out of which the houses and cathedral grow. Seen from below, the church of San Pedro is imposing, and on the other side of the town, to the left of the cathedral, at a wonderful height on the cliff, ancient rickety houses project their balconies supported by wooden posts fixed in the rock. The thought of living there is enough to take one's breath away. They are



now partly uninhabited and waiting only for the passing of a few more years in order to topple down into the abyss. On their town side they stand in the Calle de los Canónigos (street of the Canons), a narrow street between tall houses, leading up to the cathedral, close to the similar Calle del Clavel (Street of the Carnation). Time, which will destroy those houses, will replace them with others, which grow every year more picturesque in their sheer position on the cliff, so that in a century or two Cuenca will be a marvel indeed. The Huecar even in the height of summer is a fairly broad river, rapid and grey-green. It flows into the Jucar near the Puente de San Antonio. Above, the town rises steeply to the tall clock-tower and a large seminary, and far above on the bare hill is the tiny white Ermita del Socorro. The houses stand many hundreds of feet above the rocky ravine through which the Huecar makes its way ; it seems an act of heroic courage to sit sewing at one of those windows. Perhaps a thousand feet sheer above the Huecar, a man engaged in building a house is outlined against the sky ; it looks as if one slip, one step must precipitate him into the chasm, and every knock he gives sounds far louder on the other side of the river above the road in the echo of the rock, as though some giant were hard at work high on the mountain side. On the town side poplars, vines and fruit-trees ascend precipitously above the river, and beneath the walls of the houses. Beyond, the hermitage of San Isidro stands above a mighty wall

of castellated grey and rusty-red rocks—the continuation of the hill on which Cuenca is built—many of them eaten away into the shape of turrets or gargantuan champagne corks. The gorge of the Huecar is deep in shadow comparatively early in the afternoon, while the sun still lights up the ivied walls above and shines mellowly along houses and churches and flashes in silver on the window-panes. From here only the top of San Pedro, seen so well from the Jucar side, is visible. In the evening mule-carts come slowly along the roads from Teruel and Valencia; the shouts of the muleteers sound loudly in this peaceful scene. Citizens come down, by the steep path past las Angustias, from the hot town to the cool shade of this ravine. Some bring their *merienda*, some come to fish or to row on the river, in which the cliff's trees and houses are all faithfully reflected. Others dance or play at bowls under the poplars, near little booths with gleaming gaily-coloured drinks. Far above, the houses—or rather cliffs of wall with windows at intervals—still retain the last light of day or display little dots of electric light. The very fine view from a window of the cathedral is of the other side, the Jucar valley in its poplars and fruit-trees, and the hills beyond patched with red and brown ploughland and yellow stubble-fields. The severe fortress-like cathedral has the most beautiful work in iron (one of the *rejas* has vivid scenes of the story of Adam and Eve) and wood. On one of its walls is an inscription telling “ of the

reconquest of Cuenca by Alfonso IX : " El Rey don Alonso IX gano a Cuenca Miercoles dia de Sant Matheo xxj. de Septiembre año del señor jvclxxvij. At Cuenca the clean little shops which sell both earthenware—graceful *botijos* fabricated in the town—and fruit seem innumerable. Sometimes they also sell *abarcas*, a kind of sandal formerly made of leather, now often of canvas heel and tip and rubber sole, or that excellent honey tasting of thyme and other flowers of the *sierra*, from which it is gathered in spring and autumn. Another of Cuenca's industries is that of pine-planks floated down the Jucar from the Sierra de Albarracín. Of old the town was famous for its manufacture of cloth. Cuenca, with but 11,000 inhabitants, has an individual character, somewhat different, perhaps fiercer and more aggressive than the Castilian. One must remember that it is on the extreme eastern limit of New Castille, and not much further from Valencia. From the province of Cuenca have come men of penetrating intelligence, who went to the very root of a question, men like Fray Luis de Leon of Belmonte and Fray Melchor Cano of Tarancón, both of them unsparing in denunciation of the enemies of the faith and indeed of their personal enemies. It was this directness and intensity that gave a character of peculiar violence to religious dissensions at Cuenca. Heretics were burnt, and Jews were hurled down the precipitous cliff. Some of the first Protestants and Alumbrados flourished there. A priest of Cuenca it was who killed his



MADRID  
THE PUERTA DE TOLEDO



Protestant brother, and the gentle Valdé's brothers, Alonso the friend of Erasmus, and Juan, almost if not quite a Lutheran, left their native city never to return. Something of this uncompromising character remains in the character of the inhabitants of Cuenca even to-day, although the town is changing and a large hôtel has taken the place of the old Posada del Sol or the Parador de las Diligencias. Many of the towns and villages of the province of Cuenca are interesting: Huete under a great bare greyish-yellow hill, its churches and convents likewise grey and yellow, scarcely to be distinguished from the hillside—one cannot indeed from a short distance tell where the ruins of the old castle above the town ends and the hillside begins; Vellisca, in a position similar to that of Huete, of which it is a smaller copy, Huelves in trees and vines on the river Riansares, Tarancon celebrated as Cano's birthplace, Belmonte.

#### BELMONTE

It is not known that more than two foreigners have gone out of their way to visit Belmonte, the birthplace of Luis de Leon, one of Spain's greatest sons. The house in which he was born in 1527 is no longer standing. As always when one leaves the beaten track in Spain the expedition is not without interest, for it brings one into touch with the finest part of the population, the peasants. The train will take you only so far as Socuéllamos. Here the clean primitive Fonda de Plá, owned by

a Valencian, is frequented by commercial travellers. A great almond tree half fills the cobbled entrance court, from which a rough staircase goes to the upper rooms. The wind gently rustles the hangings of cloth or matting in the doorways. In a little room off the cobbled court is a small round table at which the guests dine : an electrical mechanic from Albacete in his blue overalls, commercial travellers in wines and shoes from Murcia and Valencia, a mine overseer from Andalucía (he had worked under Englishmen, whom he described as domineering and obstinate, " but if you follow them implicitly you will do very well "). It was at this inn that a request for a book to read—a request worth making in all out-of-the-way parts, to see what will be the result—brought sad disenchantment in the shape of " Los Hijos del Pueblo." Por Eugenio Sue. The great castle of Belmonte is seen for many leagues, a dark mass across the plain. A mule *diligencia*, driven by a vivacious young Valencian, goes daily from Socuéllamos to Belmonte and back, past Las Mesas, Pedronales and Pedernoso. It fills slowly with packages and persons in the early morning in the *corral* of a typical Manchegan *posada*, with its awning-covered mule-carts, and muleteers lying asleep on red and yellow plaids between the great pillars of the tiled portico that runs round the court. At last, heavily loaded, it rattles and lurches out of the court and is soon in the open country. Nowhere else can one obtain a better idea of the immensity of the plain of La Mancha, its bareness and desola-

tion and harsh colouring. Yet stretching away beneath the cloudless sky, which seems to meet and enfold it, it has a certain original beauty and even charm. Occasionally one comes upon a tiny oasis, perhaps a huge plane-tree with a well beneath it, its primitive *arcaduces* turned by a donkey. By one such well it was that in the shade of trees stood a man who was only vaguely familiar until it flashed upon one's memory that it was Sancho Panza in person. Most of the peasants, thin and of medium height, oval faces, clear profiles, are too stately and ascetic to remind one in any way of the wise Governor of Barataria, although they are good-tempered and intelligent. But here was the little man to the life; short and stout he was, and shrewdness, good humour and malicious *socarronería* appeared in every line and wrinkle of his round face flushed with sun and wine. He wore black sandals, black velvet corduroy trousers, a wide black sash, a grey blouse and a grey kerchief round his head, falling at the back (not at the side, as in Valencia). The ruthless *diligencia* went on its way before one had had time for more than to exchange greetings, leaving the little man with his proverbs all unuttered. Peasants, proud and dignified, passed riding on asses or driving their great carts, covered with white awnings, with the air of *señores*. A man walked beside a cart filled with immense earthenware jars—capable of hiding a thief a piece in comfort—*tinajas* from Villarobledo (the black smoke of its factory appears beyond Socuéllamos).



At the end of July the last wheat is being reaped, and the *garbanzos* are yellowing in the fields: the plant resembles that of a potato in size and has vetch-like leaves and pods containing one *garbanzo* each, which will presently be threshed out like corn. Bulbs of saffron (*azafran*) are already planted under the ripening melons in some of the fields, which early in autumn will thus be a beautiful sea of colour. For those who are not devotees of Luis de Leon Belmonte has little of interest except its great castle. Seen close this castle has a touch of red about it, and with its stout walls and turrets is worthy of its position dominating the boundless plain thousands of feet above the sea. There are remains of turreted walls round the town, some of the houses have massive coats of arms, and there are columned arcades along some of the streets. Beneath the castle hill is a fine avenue of elms and beyond is a clump of tufted pines. It is a little town of dignified courteous inhabitants, whose quiet lives are disturbed at most by an occasional market day, when carts come in from the surrounding country and a few vegetables and fruits are displayed on the ground in one of the little squares.

### III

## BARCELONA AND THE EAST COAST

### BARCELONA

**S**PRING comes early in Catalonia and makes its presence felt even in the streets of Barcelona before the year is many days old. By the middle of February the cold is over. In the dawn of a February day a tinkling of goat-bells sounds through the streets as in the growing light the many herds, large and small, are driven in from the hills by long-bloused peasants, or women in bright-coloured dresses, yellow, blue, red, with large white kerchiefs. The iron corrugated shutters are drawn up with a slow rasping from the shop-windows, the humble shops advance their stalls and baskets of fruit and vegetables on to the pavement, and in the little wooden kiosks the first morning papers are heaped in neatly folded piles fresh from the press. Workmen, carrying their day's provisions in a knotted handkerchief, pass silent-footed in their sandals, and women hasten, basket on arm, to early market. On the hills round the city the silence is unbroken save for a rustling of wind among the pines. On the level ground along the bases of the hills the almond-trees in flower are

as a morning frost on the face of the earth, but the air is warm and the sky already a deep blue. On rising ground every leafless twig, every almond-blossom, every silvery-grey branchlet of olive is seen chiselled distinctly against the sky. Down a steep path of rust-red earth and rocks, bordered by tall hedges of blue-green aloe, the delicious colour of the great spiked leaves of aloe, a peasant-woman comes hurrying with a great open basket overflowing with mimosa and white jonquils, carnations and violets, to be displayed presently on one of the stalls of the Rambla de las Flores. Peasants in shirts of intense blue, brown corduroy trousers and black sashes are at work in their little plots of vegetables and flowers. The city and harbour of Barcelona are half hidden in a light morning mist, but on the other side of Montjuich the sea is silver and blue, and, beyond a wide space of dreary flats, the little river Llobregat flows beneath a line of bare hills, a thin gleam of silver, to the sea. The hills round Barcelona are bare and dry, without a stream, bare beneath the tufted pines which even in the early morning throw their round patches of shadow black in the sunshine. Here and there some whin is in flower, or a few bushes of broom are tipped with yellow, in flower too a few dwarf asphodels. Upon the steep and slippery hillside are several stragglers with handkerchiefs knotted to the end of a stick in search of pine-cones and various berries and mushrooms. For one is in Catalonia: in most other parts of Spain no care

would be given to such things. But the Catalan, as the proverb says, "the Catalan of the stones makes bread for man." Lower down, the sunny *torres* stand in their tidily ordered gardens and little terraces of flowers and trailing creepers. Cosmopolitan Barcelona! In a remote quarter, far from the pleasant Ramblas, lined with trees and crowded with a ceaseless throng of people, far from the clean warehouses with their great mounds of neat parcels and bales and boxes, far from the cathedral and those fascinating dark Gothic churches, Santa María del Pino and Santa María del Mar—what a solemn gloom round their old stained-glass windows!—there is a street called Calle de Verdi, and a little shop called La Inglesa and a small wineshop, Los Dardanelos. Then, just to show that we are in Catalonia, there is a tiny indigenous baker's shop, Forn de Sant Pere (St. Peter's Oven). In July the Rambles are little less crowded than in the full season. Up and down goes the broad stream of people endlessly moving past. Many walk quickly, with energetic gestures, swinging their arms. For among this vigorous, temperate people industry is held in honour. The first thing one sees on entering the beautiful church of Santa María del Mar, St. Mary of the Sea, is an inscription to a tradesman. "This is the tomb of Fulano de Tal, Apothecari." And there is all the dignity of Catalan tradesmen and workmen in the summer Ramblas. Perhaps there is a little more colour than usual, though it is rare. The white and red of a Catalan policeman, the

scarlet of a *hôtel botones* stand out in the prevailing black and grey; but the workmen have blue or red sashes, and there is a good deal of yellow. The shop assistants often wear yellow smocks. The younger workmen and apprentices have ugly grey cotton caps or peaked caps of green or yellow velveteen. On the rough wooden stalls the last *clavells* struggle for mastery with the invading dahlias. In November the flower-stalls are covered with a snow of chrysanthemums beneath the brown leaves of the thinning plane-trees, through and beyond which begin to appear the plain and modest fronts of the houses on either side of the Rambla. These houses, which leafy June hides away, are very different from the tortured fantastic architecture of the modern houses beyond the Plassa de Catalunya, along the Paseo de Gracia, which give one the impression of having been built by Quevedo when recovering from one of his *Sueños*. In the dark narrow streets that twine and interlace in the old city to right and left of the central Ramblas the first autumn chestnuts are being sold. But in February, violets, carnations, white and yellow jonquils are all along the stalls. Even on the first day of the year roses, geraniums, heliotrope, irises, are in flower in the gardens, and a few green leaves still hang on the plane-trees of the Ramblas. Out at sea thousands of seagulls whirl like snowy petals above the spray of great waves, breaking in transparent green, and, beyond, the sea is colour of violets. In the *puerto*, the inner harbour, near the rows of

palms, the water is dull-green and deadly calm round the hulls of ships. Dark-golden mounds of oranges lie along the quay. Here is a bustle of life and magic of changing colour; a mile or so away on the other side of the city, in the pine hills below Tibidabo, is an immeasurable silence. Six, seven, eight notes sound in the silence from a deep-toned bell striking the hour, and immediately the bells of many churches and convents ring out in the clear air. The distant mountains are faintly purple, and so distinct that every fold and crevice of rock are clearly seen. One or two of them are crowned with snow, and the eye, looking for a first view of the Pyrenees, is beguiled with clouds in snow-white banks.

#### ZARAGOZA

The Pyrenees are seen clearly enough from Zaragoza, although as compared with Barcelona the Aragonese city seems to be in the very heart of Spain. To see Zaragoza on a cloudless day in late autumn is to have a study in blue and yellow: the two yellow brick cathedrals, the *Seos*, with their coloured domes and tall slender towers (inside the cathedrals are walled high with blue *azulejos*), or the beautiful octagonal tower of San Pablo, beneath windy blue skies, across which sound the church bells ringing to mass or evensong; the river, full and swollen, swirling magnificently under the arches of the great bridge, a bluish metallic gleam on the surface of its yellow flood, and yellowing beech-trees along its banks. In the streets there is but little colour; citizens and peasants are often garbed in black, or

the latter wear dark velvet-corduroy breeches, white worsted stockings, with a kerchief, black or coloured, wound about the head; but perhaps a *colegio* of priests and novices passes, and the blue and scarlet of their stoles lights up the street. The Aragonese are famous for their strong will and indeed for an invincible stubbornness. The lines of a peasant's mouth are set in a final and unassailable determination. Yet the faces one sees in the streets are open and good-natured, the features clean-cut, the speech not harsh, but clear and pleasant; the movements and gestures of the people are quiet rather than violent, and their attitude is marked by affability and *llaneza*. They evidently keep their obstinacy for special occasions. Zaragoza has a maze of narrow cobbled streets and over-arching brick houses—yard-wide streets, clean and delightful little shops—*alpargaterías* or *boterías*, and it has preserved names of an indigenous cast such as the Calle del Clavel or the Posada de las Almas. But in order to realize the magnificence of Zaragoza one must go outside. From Buena Vista, to the west of Torrero, in a gold and purple sunset glowing along intense leaden-blue hills, the city is seen in a splendid setting. Immediately below, extends a plain of ploughland, orchards, and maizefields, here and there a sentinel tree, and the bare steep banks of the Ebro; then the long line of Zaragoza, with its many churches and towers; and beyond, at first indistinct, then brought out most clearly in an exquisite whiteness, and at last fading away like rosy

clouds of the sunset, the eternal snows of the Pyrenees.

The immense treeless plains of stubblefields and yellowing vineyards of Aragon in autumn fade away to a distant horizon of faint blue hills. And there are deserts thinly covered with thyme and interrupted by bare crumbling hills of reddish earth strangely scored and folded and interlaced with catacombs and sudden hollows. The ancient towers and queer streets of Tudela stand out in such a desert.

Tortosa, with its dingy streets and abrupt winding ways, is the last town and Amposta, a cluster of houses round a great church under a high mountain, is the last village on the banks of the swiftly gliding Ebro, celebrated by Cervantes. To one who has followed the coast of Catalonia from Tarragona, Tarragona of the splendid profile and Cyclopean walls and wonderful cloisters and Roman ruins crumbling in the fierce sunshine above a transparent sea, the change in the country on approaching the Ebro is very striking. For after Reus, a few miles inland, lying amid quiet green country and pleasant well-kept gardens with avenues of palm and orange, he will have seen scarcely a vestige of fresh green.

#### HOSPITALET

The little fishing village of Hospitalet is separated from Cambrils to the north and Ametlla to the south by barren plains of whin and rosemary and thyme, and dwarfed palms thinly sprinkled with tufted pines, and even when the country is cultivated the fields are scarcely to be distinguished from stony riverbeds and only carob-trees flourish, with a few



wind-vexed olive-trees where the proportion of soil is larger. The road from Cambrils to Hospitalet ascends gently and shows the plain purple and black below. In March a bitter wind blows down the passes of the bare leaden-blue mountains and across the plain. It rattles the few window-panes and hisses through the paneless window-frames of Hospitalet's houses. That this land wind is not confined to March is proved by the partial growth of the trees which bend away from the mountains and bow themselves and flourish on their Mediterranean side. But even in March there may be a magnificent tranquil sunrise of smoked orange, yellow, red and soft light green, while the clear morning-star throws a path of light across the unwrinkled sea. The little sea-village of Hospitalet has some five hundred inhabitants. It is built of a yellowish stone, mostly unwhitewashed, and its chief feature is the ruined castle, "a thing of the Moors," with its huge old walls and square tower; the church now forms part of it. There is a mayor (*alcalde de barrio*), a priest, a doctor, but no judge. There is an infant school, in which the children are educated until they are old enough (i.e. eight or nine) to go to work in the fields. These fields are divided by stone walls and are themselves little else than stones. They produce carob-trees, with a few olives, fig-trees, vines, and vegetables. The Hospitalet innkeeper, a tall stout man of about sixty, had been a fisherman; in his eyes was a far-away look and his face had an expression of mixed



EL ESCORIAL  
A GENERAL VIEW



cunning, stupidity, and kindness. He wore a blue blouse, with wide black *faja* (sash) and trousers patched in brown and yellow; a magenta kerchief was bound round his head. Helped by his small niece, he himself attended to the cooking, bending his great limbs over the fire that burnt on the stone floor in a corner of the kitchen. The room was without ornament of any kind, but clean, with whitewashed uneven walls and rafters. He fried the fish over blazing sprigs of rosemary (those *palitos de romero seco* to which Santa Teresa compared unreliable mankind, and which here at least were serving an excellent purpose) between two logs on which simmered an earthenware pot of rice. And his conversation was mainly of the iniquity of priests. *Cura?* We have one—one too many (*uno y sobra*). *Si es probe el cura?* Why he has two servants! Yes and he has five hundred pesetas a year from Government, and ten *reales* (four *reales* are one peseta) a day from the land of the *Rectoría* and a peseta for every baptism, and ten times as much for a wedding or a funeral, and five *reales* at least for a mass. In England there are no priests? Long pause. Then, after the astounding fact that in England there are priests had sunk in: In England the Government does not pay the priests? Now English bishops are often in serious financial difficulties, but to translate their incomes into pesetas and inform the good man of the resulting sums would have been too much for his equanimity and might have interfered seriously with the preparations for that excellent meal. When

men have become really civilized they will prepare all their meals over flaming twigs of scented shrubs, rosemary and whin and thyme and cistus (and eat them after a tramp across a wind-swept plain).

#### IN ASTURIAS

As he talked one thought somehow—the sheer contrast of it—of another coast, another sea-village, where there is simple faith and simple joy of living. High in the pass of Pajares, with the deep-breasted Asturian country falling away to right and left, a train is waiting at a little station, and a peasant-woman with clear blue eyes and flaxen hair is selling strings and clusters of magnificent black and red cherries from the hills. Then, as the other train rumbles slowly in, a voice from the waiting train calls “*Cuidado la de las cerejas* (*Ἡ τὰ ῥόδα ῥοδόεσσαν ἔχεις χάρις!*)—Have a care, she of the cherries!” A small boy water-seller continues his monotonous chant “*Agua fria.*” The colours worn by these mountain-peasants are a delight to the eyes. Their *bérets* are so small as to be scarcely larger than a *duro*, a five-peseta piece, but gorgeous indeed are their sashes and sandals. Here is a man in blue coat, bright green sash, yellow velvet trousers and magenta socks. Here is another with red socks and splendid magenta sandals. Below, in the valley, a small silvery-grey river flows near an “*aldea perdida*,” a cluster of low houses partly whitewashed, with broad tiled roofs of a deep rich red-brown. There is a little fishing-village of Asturias, set in wind-swept hills of grass and whin,

with clumps of chestnut-trees and pines. On either side of the village the cliffs fall sheerly to the sea, but in front is a tiny bay, crowded with fishing-boats, and a stretch of rocky shore. A penetrating smell from sheds where thousands of fish are being cured and packed pervades the narrow streets, overmastering the clean scent of hills and sea. Up the straggling main-street, between low weather-worn houses, the village priest advances slowly, a strong powerful figure unbent by the years and scarcely leaning on his stout rough stick. There might be something a little wooden and impassive about his round sun-tanned and wind-beaten face were it not for a lurking kindly humour in the eyes; about the whole man an air of rough nobility which is somehow heightened rather than diminished by his green-black cassock and broad hat of antique shape, no longer glossy. "An Englishman, I think," he says, addressing the stranger. "We have here a compatriot of yours, if you will do me the favour to accompany me—a wooden Christ in our church, cast into the sea in England many centuries ago and picked up by fishermen of our village in the North Seas. Many miracles has it wrought since its arrival. That was when England was a Christian country; now—yet even now there are many Catholics in England, is it not so? I know that the aged Queen now dead, who bore the same name as our Queen, was a Roman Catholic, although she must keep it secret for reasons of State, and there must be many others. And Iceland, you say

—yes Ireland—and Ireland, you say, is a Christian country. Had it not been for Luther—ah, you too detest him, a crude and violent man? Well, even here I have had my fight against him; and he has no foothold in this village. For once, many years ago, I was journeying on my mule to spend a fortnight in a retreat at a monastery among the hills. On the deserted road I was glad enough to be overtaken by another priest, and presently by a layman, who appeared to be a foreigner, riding a fine horse. We proceeded together and I was soon in conversation with the priest, and when the crossroads came where we must part we gave our names and villages in hope of further meeting. But the stranger, after a first formal greeting, had spoken not a single word. A few weeks afterwards, as I sat rolling my cigarette in the dining-room of my poor house, which is yours, a large parcel was brought in to me, addressed to me and covered with strange foreign stamps and postmarks. I opened it, fearful of what it might contain. Then on to the table and over my cassock on to the floor fell a cascade of little books—Spanish Testaments. I should have known that no good could come from opening strange parcels. But my thoughts turned to the silent foreigner who had been present when I gave my address upon the road. What I did, you ask? What could I do? I burnt them, I had no choice. I have burnt others too, brought to me in confession. So it has been granted to me too to serve the faith.” In a dark corner of the church stands the much

venerated wooden image, quaintly moulded and yellowed by time, or by its seafaring ; and on the walls hang many votive offerings, the gifts of those miraculously helped and healed. On the way from the church through humble crumbling side-streets the priest was greeted frequently : Adios, Don Rodrigo. Buenos días, Señor. Women passed from market, flat baskets laden with vegetables upon their head, two or three perched one above the other and balanced with careless ease. One woman thus carried two round loaves of bread, another her pair of wooden clogs. A girl in various hues of pink and red passed with a *ferrada* of water on her head, the three broad bands of burnished iron round the wood gleaming like silver in the sunshine. In the dark inn-kitchen a fire of logs and twigs sent light in gleams along the walls, hung with vessels of bronze and of copper, and on the row of shining *ferradas*, each with its ladle of burnished brass. Claudio, but now returned from the sea, a glass of cider in one hand and in the other a great chunk of *borona* (yellow maize bread), was declaring, as the door opened, that he never slept so well as in his boat at sea, on calm nights when he, the *patron*, and his seven men set up a lantern to protect the boat and all slept soundly till the breaking of the early summer dawn. " Yes," he repeated, with eyes twinkling and white teeth flashing in his fine weather-wrinkled face, " one is never so well as when at sea ; yet it is a hard life and times are bad. I am but forty, and I am not tired of the sea, but



I would not have my sons become fishermen, for times are very bad and the fish grow scarcer every year. Two sons I have, and both are in America, earning their bread ; I and María, my father's sister, are alone here in the inn." " Ah Claudio," said the priest, " if you had but faith ; if you but prayed a *rosario* with your men morning and evening, you would see, you would see." But Claudio, his strong noble features wrinkling into a smile, half friendly merriment, half trust and hope, answered, " It is not that, Don Rodrigo. It is these cold seasons that drive the fish from our coast." And as the aged priest felt a way with his stick up the steep dark stairs to visit a sick fisherman who lay in a great attic above, on an improvised bed of planks among heaped dripping nets and broken oars, Claudio said, " Es un bendito, he is a saint (a saintly simpleton)." " Yes," added María, returning to her business about the fire, " and I said to him, ' You burn their books yet you are friendly to the foreigner.' ' Pues hija mía,' he answered, ' I have kept heresy from my village, although I have lived to see a decay of faith. But as to the stranger, by friendliness and hospitality may we best persuade him.' " A welcome sizzling came from the pots set about the fire as the tapping of Don Rodrigo's stick sounded on the floor above.

#### POBLET

But let us return to the clear sunlit fascinating east coast of Spain, and on the way pay a visit to Poblet, one of the two most magnificent convents of Catalonia : the other is Santes Creus. Travellers saw

more of Spain before trains were invented, although the travellers were fewer in number. Instead of taking places of interest on a kind of merry-go-round, marked out by the railways, they planned their journey with a view to many other places of interest, however remote and now seldom visited. Even the motor-car is often useless, for many of the great monasteries, now passed by although worth visiting for their own sake and real signposts to beautiful scenery, are to be approached only by bridlepaths along the mountains: this is part of their charm. One of the most splendid of those thus neglected, although here there is a road, is this Cistercian convent of Poblet, founded in the twelfth century. It lies between Lérida and Tarragona. The train carries one as far as the village of Esplegut del Francolí, which clusters round a tall church—line over line of whitewashed houses with conventual windows, broad eaves and open verandas up under the roofs of brown tiles, covering the hill and huddled along the narrow streets. From here one may walk or drive the few miles to the convent, which was thoroughly sacked in 1835, and now has no monks, only a caretaker and his wife who have lived alone in this beautiful building for the last forty years. The road runs through wide open country stretching to a horizon of wooded hills. The stony soil is of a reddish yellow, with vines and olives. There are no houses to be seen, and the great silence everywhere is broken only by the murmur of the river Francolí, or the greeting

*Deu le guart* of the sharp-faced, thin-lipped peasants riding along on mule or donkey, or lying half-asleep in their mule-carts. A shrine of three headless statues by the roadside indicates that one is nearing the place. A long avenue of silver birch leads up to the convent, and by the side of the road the Francolí, now a turbulent stream, chuckles and rushes over its stony bed under blackberry brambles, dwarf oak and wild roses. Then the straggling group of grey convent buildings appear, sheltered by the beautifully folding, dark-wooded *sierra*, from which there is a fine view of Lérida (Cæsar's Ilerda), the sea, and the snows of the Pyrenees. The friars had a *casa de recreo* up there, now used for purposes of afforestation. Terrible was the destruction wrought at Poblet by the revolutionaries from the apparently peaceful and innocuous villages of Esplegut and Vimbodí nearly a century ago. After heavy rain one may still pick up small broken pieces of lapis lazuli from one of the wrecked altars. But Poblet still impresses by its size and architecture, attracts by its beautiful cloisters, clustered pillars and charming windows and delights by a hundred exquisite details everywhere, combining luxuriant imagination with wonderful zest and precision in the execution. They seem to be the work of one who combined genius with scholarship, but this richness of conception and delicacy of workmanship combined are characteristic of ancient Catalan sculpture. Each of the Abbots of Poblet had his

special emblem, a cup, a miniature door, a bunch of lilies, a sheaf of ears of wheat, by means of which many parts of the building can be accurately dated. In the church lies buried Philip, Duke of Wharton, who died here on a visit. Poblet is one of the most magnificent ruins in existence, a monument surely also to the ineptitude of man when he gives rein to his delight in destroying beautiful things whose usefulness he cannot perfectly understand.

#### VALENCIA AND ITS HUERTA

A bridge divides the ancient kingdom of Valencia from the principality of Catalonia; the river beneath it is dry even in spring, when all self-respecting rivers even in Spain, where they are so variable and unexpected in their movements, should be in the highest spirits. Almost in its bed of white rounded stones stands a picturesque little house of yellow stone with a touch of whitewash about the door, and a red-tiled roof. There are some aloes and fruit trees and a tall cypress hard by, and beyond is a line of faint blue mountains. The first view of Valencia from the sea is of a beautiful line of red and white on a sea of sapphire and aloe. The red and white are of about equal length, the white lying to the north. The red, to the south, is formed of quays and loosely built piers of great blocks of red sandstone. A little later appear, beyond, all Valencia's domes and towers—"les clochers de ses trois cents églises." Somehow in Valencia one's thoughts are fixed insistently upon food. It is not that there is not plenty of art and beauty here: the

lovely Lonja and other buildings, the dark-blue *azulejo* domes which give the city an Oriental look, the soft light and glowing skies. But the shops, little and large, overflowing with eatables, the rosary of mule-carts of onions, carts of oranges on their way Grao-wards, the heavy smell of food cooked in olive oil in the narrower streets, remind one that one is in one of the most prosperous, materially, of all the cities of Spain. In a house of one of the humbler streets a woman, one of those splendid Valencian women who rule their household with equal discipline and affection, calls to her children, Murillo madonnas and thin-featured energetic sons: "A dinar, chiquets," and the family closes round a smoking mound of *paella*, that excellent *paella* of rice and shellfish and vegetables and meat, but principally of rice and *pimento*, crowned with a few snails. Exquisite is the beauty and softness of the Valencian evenings when the sun has set and the fierce business of the day is ended, and the scent of the surrounding *taronchers* seems almost to penetrate into the city; or in the hot nights of Choliol and Agost, in the poorer quarters as the people sit at their doors in the darkness, a guitar strums out the same tune over and over again until the ear becomes enchanted with its melody. The real Valencia is not in the fine shops of the Plaza de la Reina or the crowded Calle Peris y Valero or Calle del Pintor Sorolla (the famous Valencian artist Joaquin Sorolla, † 1923), with their many *cafés* which spread their round

white tables along the pavement and *pastelerías* with their great erections of white cream and méringues pink, white, coffee-coloured, but in the narrow cobbled streets, which after the rush and glare of the open, more frequented spaces are so dark and lonely. Solitary pedestrians, a man in black, a priest, a woman in black mantilla, go slowly along the foot-wide pavement beneath the little iron balconies. Here we have a better idea of the austerity which stands for much in the vehement Valencian character. Black is the predominant colour, black and grey. The young modern workman may run to yellow or plum-coloured trousers—you may even see them of a purple so splendid that no canon or cardinal in all his glory could compete with them—but the peasants of the Huerta who crowd into the city all wear black. There are boat-loads of black-dressed peasants in Grao harbour, and in the markets a throng of peasants, of thin white faces, with black felt hats, black blouses, black sashes, black trousers, black sandals; an inch of white shirt appears above the black blouse, and they have the look of Protestant curates or of priests in mufti. The more old-fashioned wear black breeches and white stockings, the broad tape of their open sandals is black, as is the kerchief wound in a single band round their heads. And somehow the faces of these old men are less sad and have an energy with which one would be sorry to quarrel. Valencia has its yearly battle of flowers in the Alameda along the river Turia, and

it has its daily flower market, although this is but a poor show compared with that of the fruit and vegetable market held in front of the Lonja. Here the brilliant colours of the mounds of vegetables and fruits of every description are thrown into strong relief by the black dress of buyers and sellers : red mounds of tomatoes, green pumpkins, bright purple *topinamboures*, yellow melons with white flesh, white melons, green water-melons cut open to show the luscious growing pink, grapes black and white, and purple and yellow and amber, plums red and green and brown and dark purple and yellow, *paraguayas* like peaches, peaches, apricots, and every fruit under the sun ; a little later the plums and melons yield to the first autumn oranges. A woman at a tiny stall does a brisk trade in snails of various kinds and sizes, or deals in saffron, small sacks of vivid red and yellow powder and boxes of the crocus pistils. Spain has over 120 square kilometres of saffron meadows (*azafranales*), producing yearly about half a million sterling's worth of saffron. The soil of the wide Valencian *huerta* varies though every hue of red, from soft red-brown to vivid saffron. Channels, with a tiny path on the top of the bank at either side, overgrown with white clover and other flowers, carry the water which makes this one of the richest regions on earth, and the newly-irrigated fields gleaming reflect the sky. In almost every plot there is a horse, drawing a wishing-bone-shaped plough or standing in the shade of one of the rare trees, or



TOLEDO

THE SPIRE OF THE CATHEDRAL VIEWED FROM THE CALLE DEL COMERCIO





carrying manure in panniers, or treading out beans, or turning the *noría* wheel. Early in the year there is the fresh green of fruit trees, and fruit trees in white and pink blossom, and everywhere are fields of springing corn. To the west are blue mountains, and beyond them other distant ranges of bare rocky mountains faintly purple, and looking frail and brittle in their clear outlines beneath the hot morning sun. The sky is a soft blue and cloudless, with a grey-white horizon. Here and there are dark vertical cypresses, a tall eucalyptus or palm-tree, a line of orange-trees, a lemon-tree bowed down with fruit of palest gold. Here and there is a snow-white house with velvet black spaces of door and window, its vine-trellis or trellis of large dark-blue convolvulus resting on pillars that may be of stone or brick, round or square, and washed light-blue or white. Close by is the *noría* with its long crooked handle of wood and dark-red-brown earthenware jars gushing water perpetually, ascending and descending. Men are ploughing under the olives and among the still leafless vines, and a white water-botijo lies in a recent furrow. The *barracas*, those quaint and charming peasant cottages immortalized by Blasco Ibañez, with their grey thatch and pointed gables, are almost the shape of an isosceles triangle, and show more roof than snowily-washed side. The "alegre barraqueta valenciana" (cheerful Valencian cottage) has but one or two windows, with scarce space for a dove to pass between the wall and their single central bar of iron (real wind-eyes). At

either end of the roof is a small cross of grey wood :

Estenga eternament ta creu sagrada  
Los brazos protectors.

Across light-green waving rice-fields, with here and there low white farms and here and there clumps of tall date-palms, rises the Sierra de Cullera, and, still more prominently, the jagged peaks of the Sierra de las Agujas. Grey and brown Alcira lies on the river Jucar, which flows dull green through a red soil. There are fields of maize and of the shrill-green *garbanzos*, little woods of huge peach-trees, carob and mulberry, orange and pomegranate. The orange-trees are less pruned than those round Valencia, and grow into magnificent branching trees as in Andalucía. The rice grows in beautiful clean crops like green wheat, but thicker and less tall, with stalks bowing beneath their weight of grain. Not a poppy, not a weed of any kind is to be seen in them. The village of Manuel lies entirely surrounded by rice-fields and the Ermita del Puig (pronounced Pooch: in Lope de Vega's "El Peregrino en su Patria" it is even spelt as it is pronounced—El Puche de Valencia) stands on the top of a bare precipitous mountain of rock rising abruptly from rice-fields like a spear. Játiba, under steep mountains intersected by crenellated walls, fancifully recalls Gaspar Corrêa's curious drawing of Aden. Its avenue of magnificent planes sends in late autumn a glow of gorgeous colour through all that countryside. The houses are mostly poor peasants' dwellings crouched against the hill-side. One tiny cottage

is smothered in red geraniums of giant growth, and there are tall palms and splendid oleanders. Far inland, a white river-bed, dry but for a rosary of heavenly-blue pools, is all aglow with the pink flower of these oleanders. To the river every few hundred yards descend white torrent-beds; they, too, dry and covered with a pink glory of oleander. And there is no lovelier sight than this white limestone and the glowing masses of oleander and, below, a desultory thread of blue water, like a vein of opal in white chalk.

#### ALICANTE

It is not at the great cities of Barcelona or Valencia that the full beauty of the Mediterranean can be seen, but rather at the small towns of Tarragona and Alicante. Sunset turns the silken-surfaced bay of Alicante to opal and violet and purple. The lamps glow softly through the long lines of palms at the water's edge, and lights of a yellower radiance throw into relief the busy scenes in clean gay little eating-houses along the quay, where the palm-trees stand so silent: little tables with rough cloths, white bread, white and red wine, rice, and fruits and vegetables, and the shrewd pleasant faces of peasants from the market or of sailors from the ships at anchor.

#### ELCHE

Comparatively few visit the little town of Elche, which lies along the steep bare banks of the river Vinalapó. In Ford's day it had "a decent posada." The little primitive, pleasant Fonda de la Confianza is more than a "posada"; indeed, it calls itself an hôtel, and although it chiefly attracts

commercial travellers—for the town seems small, but is really of considerable size, with nearly 30,000 inhabitants—occasionally welcomes a stray artist in search of warmth and colour. You will be told that there is no winter at Elche, and in December the sun is fiercely hot, the sky unimaginably blue, and the sandal-makers sit at work bareheaded in the growing dusk in front of their doors. Yet a hot day may be followed by one made cold by a subtle wind blowing across bare country from distant mountain ranges, and then one can only keep the illusion of summer if one remains in sunny, sheltered places.

Elche is famous for its pine forest, for the beautiful "Lady of Elche," and for the mystery play acted yearly in August in the parish church. The church's great gleaming sapphire dome of glazed tiles towers above the palms, and the mellow notes of its clock and bells sound continually. Morning and evening cows and goats, with jingling, tinkling bells, are driven into the town. The herdsmen have no dog or stick, but when they get into the country drive them by means of stones, with which the fields abound. The apparently poor, parched, grey-white soil is ploughed in small squares and circles and crescents, sometimes hedged by a stout fence of palm leaves, and is planted with vegetables, fruit trees, wheat, and thin vineyards. Here and there a farm-house has its orchard of pomegranates, its hedges of cactus and aloe, or a small hovel is almost hidden by a great geranium or vine trellis or lemon-tree. On a Sunday the men of Elche wear black blouses and trousers of black or

brown or rich plum-coloured velvet, and the women colour the streets with their long woollen shawls of red or brown or yellow. On occasions of special solemnity the grey town is bright with the national colours along its balconies, and a procession with drums and trumpets passes up the long street to the church. The *ilicitanos*, as the inhabitants of Elche are called, are shrewd and industrious; their thinly wrinkled faces remind one of the peasants of the Valencian Huerta, and a variant of Catalan is spoken even here. The surrounding palm forest has a wonderful fascination. The dates, which are excellent when allowed to ripen fully, hang green and yellow and many shades of brown from the fan-like stalks of boiled-lobster colour, and sometimes, seen against the deep blue of the sky, make a contrast of colour so harsh that one would suffer it in no picture.

But the slender stems and waved branches of these palms are lovely in their many varying curves against the delicious liquid luminous green of the sunset sky with a golden horizon and indigo hills beyond, or when the spaces between the stems are slabs of cloudless turquoise, or a huge full moon hangs from one of the tall palm-trees like a celestial fruit or one of the street lamps of heaven. No artist can catch the transparent glow of these skies or the colour of the bare many-wrinkled *sierras*, which changes from blue-purple to grey-white and grey. Some of the mountains are folded like a carved flower, and have something of the bloom of a fruit or flower upon them. One of them at certain hours and seasons resembles a great dark-purple iris.

## IV

### VILLAGES OF LAS HURDES

Era un trozo de tierra hurdana  
Con una alquería,  
Era un trozo de mundo sin ruido,  
De mundo sin vida.

GABRIEL Y GALÁN.

**I**N order to see that strange unknown region of west-central Spain called Las Hurdes (or Las Jurdes) the best plan is to take train from Salamanca to Fuente de San Esteban and thence the *diligencia* to Sequeros. About half-way of this latter journey lies Tamames, a picturesque brown village among fruit trees. Some of the villages passed are much smaller, as Santa Olalla, with scarcely a hundred inhabitants (eighty-nine is the official figure). The brown-roofed houses are very low and for the most part windowless. The wayfarers are few—two priests ambling down on mules, one or two peasants, a boy on a donkey with a great live calf slung across it, a girl by the roadside in skirt of brown and blouse of vivid sulphur blue, tending a drove of turkeys fattening for Christmas. But it is when one reaches the delightful villages of Arroyo Muerto, with a stream showing in summer

only occasional signs of life, and Aldeanueva de la Sierra that one realizes that one is in the highlands. One now meets a few angular peasants riding proudly along in leisured dignity, dressed in antique brown or black. To the right rises the lofty peak of the Sierra de la Peña de Francia (its shrine is mentioned by Cervantes in "La Gitanilla") on which the convent of the Dominicans is perched, and below in the valley lies San Martín, a beautiful village between Sequeros and the convent. The view from a few hundred yards above Sequeros is one of the finest imaginable. It is really more Italian than Spanish and curiously turns the thoughts to Siena and Assisi, whether this be due to the tall cypresses standing sentinel over the white church on the hill or to the intense blue of the mountains beyond. For Sequeros is surrounded by mountains. This lower range is that of the intensely blue hills above Hervas, to the left of which stands the taller and greyer—rockier—Sierra de Bejar, covered with snow most of the year and preserving great patches of snow along its long back even in late August. To the right is all the splendour of the Sierra de la Peña de Francia. Immediately below, the little village of Sequeros straggles down a wooded hill in narrow irregular streets of cobbles and houses roofed with beautiful brown tiles and made curious by arches, arcades, courts and alleys, balconies, verandas, projecting eaves. Were the place more accessible and had it a good *fonda* it would certainly be visited yearly by hundreds of *veraneantes*



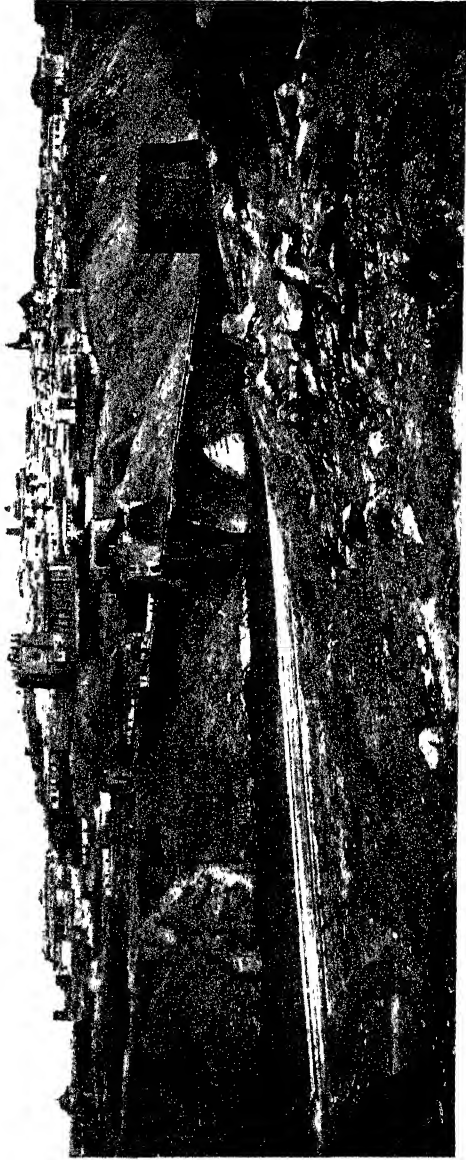
for its picturesqueness and lovely scenery, and, although the heat can be great, there are shade and streams always within reach. The *parador* of Laureano Rodríguez is in a delightful position above the village and is very primitive. It would be pleasant enough were it not for its marvellous sanitary arrangements, with the corollary of a plague of flies. (It may be noted that one of the permanent guests at this *parador* is the doctor.) A pretentious modern hotel would ruin the charm of the place, but a low convent-like building of clean whitewashed cells for travellers, with a bathroom and a good cook, would attract many foreigners and Spaniards. It is here that the traveller to Las Hurdes says good-bye to roads, except for a short stretch between Mogarraz and Alberca. The way to Las Casas del Conde is an exceedingly steep stone path. Las Casas, called by the malevolent del Sapo (of the Toad) instead of del Conde (of the Count), is a tiny exquisite village of brown roofs clustering on the same abrupt hill as Sequeros, although the two villages are invisible to one another. Las Casas is smothered in vines and fig-trees, huge vine trellises, walnuts, chestnuts, olives, and all manner of fruit trees. On a summer afternoon it is one of the hottest places in Spain. About it are lanes of loose lichened stone walls covered with blackberry, honeysuckle, ivy, and broom. From time to time a great pumpkin plant overflows from a garden and completely covers the wall of the lane with its huge leaves and hanging pumpkins and gaudy golden

flowers. The houses have grey wooden balconies gay with pots of flowers, flights of granite steps and rickety weatherbeaten verandas, one above the other to the projecting eaves. In the early morning the sun, still unseen, sends a radiance of light up the valley beyond and impurples the great Sierra de Bejar. A living gleam of silver marks the course of a distant stream. Mogarraz, on the opposite hill, is an equally picturesque but larger village, and on the top of a farther hill, opposite Mogarraz, and with a line of blue mountains above it, appears Monforte, a storied cluster of brown roofs in trees. Probably the only time Mogarraz figures in literature is in a *farsa* of Lucas Fernández. Some of its houses have coats-of-arms and inscriptions: Ave María or the name of the original owner. The granite gives them a look of age, and one is surprised to find that many date from the beginning of the nineteenth century. This little town has an infinity of steep cobbled streets, arched alleys, quaint arcaded *plazuelas*. The houses with their irregular roofs, flowered balconies, grey rickety verandas, scarcely pretend to fall into line so as to form a street. They resemble a crowd of peasant women squabbling in a market-place, each with independent gestures. The door of the house opens into the stable or on to a dark flight of very steep steps leading to the upper room. Many of the houses are built of timber with stones roughly set in between, the sides of some of them are of planks warping and peeling off like the bark of a eucalyptus tree. In

a tiny dark shop in the centre of the village a goldsmith makes the great gold earrings and the buttons of gold and silver gilt worn by the peasants. It is, however, at the next village, Alberca, that the *serrano* or *charro* dress is to be seen at its best. The road thither from Mogarraz goes out and up by the Calle Nueva ; there is on one side a row of irregular picturesque houses, and on the other stand fig-trees, olives, and an immense oleander in magnificent glowing pink flower which shade the street and touch the houses across the road. A high road continues all the way to Alberca, which lies high on the *sierra*, a beautiful brown village in chestnut-trees (somewhat unfairly described by Richard Ford as "a dark, dingy, dirty hamlet") with perhaps 1,500 inhabitants, mostly well-to-do and enterprising peasants. Some of the houses grow out of granite boulders, and women with golden skirts, or skirts of orange, gold and brown, wash clothes in the stream below. A wedding or other festival, civil or religious, at Alberca is a wonderfully curious sight. Beautiful ancient plates and old silver are produced for the occasion, friends and neighbours lending their store, and both men and women don their ancient costumes with all their finery of gold and silver. Some of the women daily wear gold earrings and necklaces of beads of gold with small crosses attached : the two ancient dames who keep a tavern in the quaint arcaded *Plaza Mayor* are magnificently arrayed in curious gold earrings, the size of their ears, and large necklaces of gold. For

special ceremonies all the family heirlooms are worn, nearly all are of gold filagree (sometimes with enamel), much of which is very interesting, old and good. The men wear at their shirt-collars a link of two buttons: sometimes they are of silver or silver-gilt and comparatively small, but often they are of pure gold and large as chestnuts, or larger. They are curiously worked and may cost from ten to twenty *duros* (two or three pounds sterling) the pair. The short Eton-fashion *chaqueta* of black velvet has silver buttons made out of *duros*, and the plush waistcoat or *chaleco*—perhaps dark blue with buttonholes worked in light green silk—has two rows of hanging silver buttons, eight or ten on each side, flat and of rectangular shape or round, flower-shaped and hollow, with openwork and tiny bosses. The velvet breeches or *bombachos*, black or very dark blue or brown, a peculiar feature in the dress of all this country-side—they open out widely just below the knee like sailors' trousers—are fastened with more *duro*-buttons and also have rows of smaller silver buttons at the knee. The *faja* (sash), black or dark blue, is worn very wide; the hard small peaked hat is of black velvet. In fact Mr. Petulengro in all his glory was scarcely decked out like one of these. Black *polainas* or leggings, fastened by endless small black buttons, take the place, on ceremonial occasions, of rough white woollen stockings. The number of wedding-guests is only limited by the size of the upper room, to which a flight of steep steps ascends from the

doorway of the house. Some of these rooms are veritable museums, with carved wooden chests, ancient pottery, valuable old glazed plates, copper jugs, long-handled brass saucepans for boiling milk, huge copper strainers for the making of honey, iron *gallos*, etc., etc. The *gallos* are shaped roughly like a cock, the meat to be roasted being hung on the crest: strange that our word gallows, with so different a hanging, should be so similar. The lover of curious old work may still find much in these houses to delight his heart; bargains he will probably not obtain, as the antiquaries have been at work, and the peasants show themselves unwilling to sell except for fairly high prices. An old woman will ask you what you will give for a beautiful piece of gold filagree, inherited from her great-great-grandmother, and then, when you have named a price, will exclaim, "Why, I gave that for it myself!" Still, for many reasons Alberca is emphatically worth visiting—for the village itself, its cheerful, intelligent inhabitants, and all this old work in wood, earthenware and iron, copper, gold and silver. It is also the best starting-place for the tremendous ascent to the Dominican convent of La Peña de Francia. The Dominicans go there from Salamanca in summer after the snows have melted, and go away with the swallows, but a *hermitaño* remains on the top of this high mountain all the year round, cut off for weeks at a time from all communication with the outer world. One pictured to oneself this saintly venerable man, with long white beard,



TOLEDO

A GENERAL VIEW, SHOWING THE PUENTE DE SAN MARTIN



dressed in Dominican white and black, and doing penance in the rain and snow. At Alberca, however, one may be disillusioned, for there one may meet his mother, who will tell you that he lives up there with his wife and child, but thinks of giving up this mode of life unless the monks give him more than his present five *reales* (i.e. about a shilling) a day for looking after the place. A strike of hermits! The first view of Las Hurdes from the mountain-neck above Alberca is sufficient to strike the solitary traveller with awe, if not dismay. Except for some steep wooded mountain-sides immediately above Las Batuecas, there is not a single tree to be seen, not a single bush nor stream nor village nor building of any kind: only range after range of interminable brown *sierras*, rounded and deeply folded, all parched and desolate under the pitiless sun of Extremadura. One knows at least that the convent of Las Batuecas lies far below in the ravine, into which a rough stony path endlessly winding is to take one violently. The phrases *ir a las Batuecas*, *criado en las Batuecas* are proverbial in Spain, Las Batuecas corresponding to our Botany Bay, and it will be remembered that Larra wrote two letters from Las Batuecas, under cover of which he maliciously described the Spain of his day. One finds at the convent not the black and white "robes of Dominick," but the beautiful deep brown of the Carmelites. From 1597 to 1872 the convent of Las Batuecas belonged to the Carmelites, in the latter year it was destroyed by fire, and now only



the church, a small outer building and the entrance arch remain. In 1916 the Carmelites returned (there were still only six of them in 1917), not, however, before the convent had received further injury from the destruction of its great cedars, cut down by the intermediate owner of the place. The situation is one of the most lovely in Spain and inevitably recalls Sintra. The convent in its cypresses and olives is, with its *finca*, the only level space in this deep ravine, "a most alpine gorge," from which there seems no way out, even for the beautiful little river, *el rio de las Batuecas*, which flows rapidly through and over white stones and boulders that under the water take on a Salamanca golden brown and form deep transparent pools, and is closely hemmed in on either side by woods of broom, heather, lentisk and arbutus, and crossed by a few narrow bridges of stone. The mountainsides rise rapidly, and immediately above the convent, thus wedged and sheltered in its gully, are little hermitages among trees for those who desire a still greater solitude than that provided by the convent itself. A path leads along the babbling river to Las Mestas, the first village of Las Hurdes, a little over a league from the convent. The village of Las Mestas, especially seen from the farther side, is one of the most beautiful of villages, lying as it does in a narrow gorge of lofty mountains, a cluster of some fifty houses (it claims to have 64 *vecinos*) of Salamanca brown, with black roofs formed of great slabs of slate, round

the low little church among its splendid cypresses. The church has a little whitewash and a line of blue round its square doorway, with a grey belfry of two bells. The village is surrounded by a grove of beautiful olive-trees, young and glossy, and beyond is the great rugged mountain above Las Batuecas, with its dark-wooded ravines, white or white and yellow-brown screes and bare craggy peaks against the cloudless blue sky. Las Mestas has a school, a plain, low and very clean-kept building, half of which is set aside for the use of the *maestro*. The priest, Don Angel, is able to have his *tertulia* of a summer afternoon or winter evening, when he and the *maestro* and one or two other principal inhabitants play at cards for halfpennies. Doctor there is none, and the inhabitants complain bitterly that although they with three other *alquerías* (hamlets) contribute 500 pesetas yearly for a doctor (the share of Las Mestas amounting to two pesetas each *vecino*) he never comes, and if a doctor is needed a man with a mount has to go for him to Alberca or Cepeda, leagues away, and the fee is twenty-five pesetas. Most provisions have to be brought from Alberca across the mountains, but a kid is occasionally killed in the village for a wedding or other festival, and Las Mestas is rather prosperous as *hurdano* villages go. Bread and wine, however, have to be imported from villages distant several leagues. One has certainly seen more miserable villages, and above all many large villages and towns might take a lesson from Las

Mestas in cleanliness. Most of the houses are low, but some have an upper chamber with floor of wood or great slabs of slate, and these are mostly clean despite the number and variety of their contents, three-legged stools a foot high, a great *escaño* (bench) of chestnut-wood, with back and sides, wooden chests, a few tomatoes, some hanging cobs of maize, pumpkins, an infinity of saints and madonnas round the walls, in which is a recess with shelves, plates, earthenware pots and glass, for show rather than use, and airless alcoves with just room for a bed. In one house there were also some books—a “Caton Metódico” for school children, a “Guia de Vida Christiana,” “Historia de Sta Genoveva,” a lawbook, “Compendio de Actuaciones,” and an account of a meeting of persons interested in the welfare of Las Hurdes, “Cronica del Congreso Nacional de Hurdanófilos celebrado en Plasencia el 14 y 15 de Junio de 1908.” The “streets” between the houses are barely a yard wide; a few hens, goats, pigs, vine trellises, chestnut-, cherry- or walnut-trees constitute the principal wealth of the inhabitants. There is plenty of excellent water, and potatoes also are plentiful and form the staple food. Coffee is almost unknown; as for bread, a man with a mule-load of fifty or sixty loaves comes in from time to time from Cepeda, three leagues across the hills. Water-jars, clothes, and in fact all manufactured articles, are dear because they have to be brought great distances over very rough mountain paths. Tobacco grows well in these hot sunny

hollows, but *a escondidillas*, since the agents of the *Compañía Arrendataria*, which farms from the State the tobacco monopoly for all Spain, are ever on the watch. The *fiesta* of Las Mestas is on September 14, when there is a procession in the village, and after the midday meal (*comida*) a *comedia*, lasting from two to four hours, is acted in the open air, in the shade of a chestnut-tree, by the *mozos* and *mozas* of the village. The *teatro* is formed of planks against the side of a house (let it not be imagined that the windows of the house can serve as stage doors: windows are not of this size in Las Hurdes). The parts, copied out by Don Angel, the *parroco*, or by a woman from Cepeda who has lived twenty years in the village, are learned during July and August. The play varies from year to year; Zorrilla's "Don Juan Tenorio" (1844) being occasionally chosen. The word *comedia*, of course, includes tragedy. From Las Mestas a path across beautiful hills of heather and cistus, with sometimes a few chestnuts, olives, and even vines, in the folds of the hills, goes to Las Vegas de Coria. It is here, and in such neighbouring villages as Arrolobo, Rubiaco, Cerezal, Nuñomoral, Murtilandran, Cambronciño, that the life of the *hurdanos* may be seen at its quaintest and most miserable. The dwellers in these villages are white and emaciated, suffering from famine and fever from the Rio Malo; their movements are listless and furtive, and they display a strange aimlessness in most of their actions and seem only half alive as they sit in front of their

doors, the women in dingy skirt and blouse, with white or coloured kerchief entirely covering the hair, some of them with shawls and earrings, the men in patched leathern *bombachos* and shirts which are also a mass of patches. Many of the faces have a look of idiotic cunning, cretinism being frequent; in others the expression is rather of complete absence of thought, as of a contemplation not beatific. The few scores or few hundreds of inhabitants in the small hamlets are all known to one another and form one great family, congregating together to gossip, although it is to be feared that the absence of priest, schoolmaster, doctor, or any other authority to murmur against, makes life the duller. They all complain sadly of the *contribuciones* to be paid quarterly and of the *consumos*, but they are themselves far more devoted to money than to hard work. They are fond of hoarding *duros*, and this is the easier because it is difficult for them to spend: there are no shops, and the soil produces little. In March, April, and May, especially, when the stocks of potatoes and chestnuts are mostly exhausted, a man may literally starve with a silver *duro* in his pocket, and many are forced to go begging alms to the richer villages, such as El Casal de Palomino, and as far afield as Bejar, Plasencia, Caceres, and Salamanca. But the tax-collector who attempts to extract these *duros* is met by every kind of malicious subterfuge. However that may be, the inhabitants feel themselves to be utterly neglected unless

money is required of them, and this breeds a certain friendliness and *esprit de corps* among the *vecinos* of each village. Indeed a friendly aimlessness will be displayed on any important or unimportant occasion, when a hundred hands and fifty voices will help to do what might have been more speedily done by one, and even after darkness has fallen, and a tiny olive-oil lamp casts a flickering and fitful light over the scene, a household will have difficulty in disembarassing itself of its kindly and solicitous but troublesome neighbours. Each individual in these hamlets, or rather these families of great children, seems to suffer from a long-repressed desire for expansion, and the reticent dignity of the Castilian is very noticeably absent. Thus one man will tell the stranger of the two or three vines he owns in the village, another of his share in a house or a donkey, or of his sole ownership of a walnut-tree, another of his military service in "*el regimiento del Rey*," of his world travels, or his knowledge of the villages of Las Hurdes, another will boast of his skill in cookery and of the seven ways of preparing eggs, a woman will show a letter and a photograph from her son in Buenos Aires, another will tell of the approaching marriage of her niece and how the new household will be the richest in the village, a child will come to kiss your hand, the regular way of asking alms, an old woman will beg to be cured of a quartan fever. And woe be to the stranger who gives to one: he will be expected to give to each *vecino* (fifty or more), in

fact a man would be unwilling to receive anything openly for fear of the envy of all the other villagers. Strangers are exceedingly rare in these parts, and the *hurdanos* have a retentive memory for them: they still tell strange stories of a Frenchman and his mother, in which his perfect sanity was not apparent. He seems to have perched himself in an olive-tree and scattered coins broadcast to the assembled villagers. One heard, too, occasionally of "Don Amundo" (i.e. Don Miguel de Unamuno, who knows this district well). Far the best way of seeing the Hurdes is to go on foot. Many of the paths are rough and precipitous, disagreeable if not dangerous for a rider; some of them are formed of jagged steps of stone and are excellent for the pedestrian, if he wears sandals. He will fare more pleasantly, go farther, see more, and be far less tired than if mounted on a mule, and he will be able to make the most of the rare shade when crossing the hills. A guide who is not a *hurdano* will be inclined to show Las Hurdes and its inhabitants as a strange and amusing spectacle, and is therefore better dispensed with, although Ignacio Hoyo and his son Juan of Alberca are excellent company, and thus offer a serious temptation to the foreigner. The shape of their heads indicates that the *hurdanos* are a race apart, and they themselves believe that they are descended directly from the Moors. In fact one of them declared that the Moors had lived long in these parts and had "only lately been driven out." Being asked

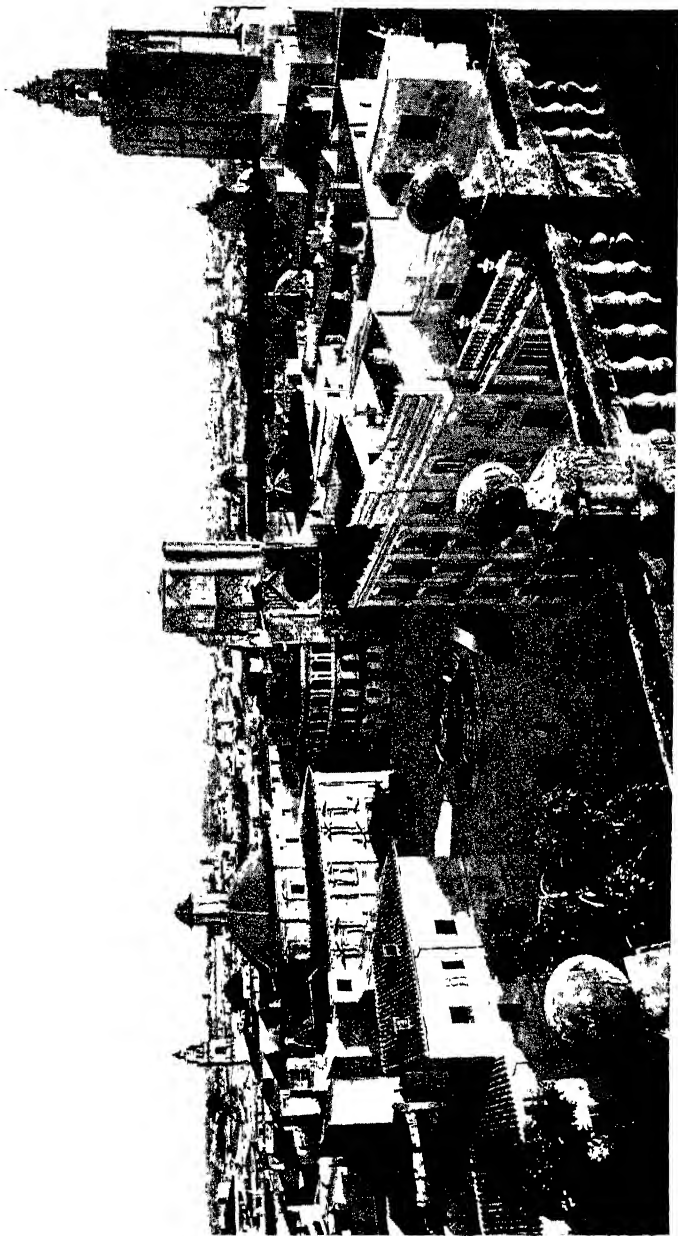
when that occurred, he answered, "About 1900, I think." The speaker would have been then about ten years old and may at that age have listened to some confused story of the Moors told round the hearth of a winter evening. But if they are exhibited as strange and curious creatures all their natural expansiveness ceases and the stranger will learn the less about them. Far better to go guideless and then, as occasion offers, take a *hurdano* guide in one of the villages. He will, of course, know far more about persons and places than could any guide from farther afield. The facts thus gathered may not be of serious importance, yet it somehow adds to one's pleasure and fits in well with the surrounding scenery to know that yonder pleasant-faced man in the field with the pointed heart-shaped *sacho* is Anastasio digging potatoes, and the pale thin woman standing near him is his mother; that this little old man with sharp features and a pronounced nose and a look of honest dignity is Tio Gregorio who has been a village councillor; that a festively dressed party of men and women on donkeys are away to a *boda* (wedding) higher in the hills; that this somewhat greener patch on the brown mountain-side had once been cultivated as an orchard by a man who had left it in order to make his fortune in the Argentine; that the man riding alone into the hills is the doctor going to assist at an *atoxia* (*autopsia*) of an old woman of 98 who had died alone in her poor house. The guide who gave all this information was from the



tiny curious village of El Cerezal, very picturesque in its misery and its fruit trees, by a river which gives it floods in winter and fever in summer. He was to guide by a shorter way to Las Calabazas. This proved to be the *camino morisco* and to pass over a rugged and lofty mountain called Lobo Carrasco, the ascent of which is excessively steep and entirely shadeless. The views, however, are magnificent: of softly-folding brown mountains like monks' cowls, extending to the Sierra de Peña de Francia and its far-seen convent, the only building visible in all that desolate country. There was no sound but that of the wind in the heath, very rarely the bells of a straggling herd of yellow-brown goats and perhaps the hiss and swish of a great heath fire. From the top the view of fresh *sierras* opens out on all sides, and the path descends less steeply along the side of several brown mountains of heather and cistus (with here and there deep ravines of rock and green—mostly arbutus—the haunts of wild boars) to distant La Huerta and Calabazas. The guide, Juan Valencia, was communicative and apparently well-informed about these parts, but had not more regard for truth than is general among the *hurdanos*. He was short, with a round white face and rather expressionless features, and he wore a round black felt hat, a loose white blouse or *chambra*, brown velveteen trousers and stout leather boots which rather resembled *chanclas* (clogs). He also wore, or carried over his shoulder, like a great shield, a pair of solid leather *zahones*,

which are worn as a protection over the trousers and fastened about the waist and by small straps at the knee. He had no stick, but a sharp sickle, for cutting *helecho* (bracken) on the hills, hung at his waist, and he carried a small bag or *taleguña*. He was 26 and recently married, and was now comparatively prosperous, as he owned part of a kitchen and a cherry-tree a mile or two from his village, which produced some three *arrobas* of cherries a year (the *arroba* is 25 lb.), but was sadly ravaged by shepherd-boys. He was a *hospiciano*, having been brought at the age of six from Plasencia to the miserable village of El Cerezal, and his accent was perhaps more refined than that of most of the *hurdanos*, whose Spanish, however, is perfectly intelligible. He would use old-fashioned forms and say *asina* (*así*) and *javalines* (*jabalíes*). His childhood had been a very stern one, receiving more hard words than roast potatoes, and at the age of twelve he had become a goatherd, spending his days in the mountains, a horn hung across his back for the goats' milk, and his chief solace his flute or *gaita*, which he still played with pleasure when occasion offered. His daily fare would be invariably goats' milk and a scanty provision of roast potatoes. Then after a long day spent in fear of wolves and wild boars and thunderstorms, he would drive down the herd to the village to be milked and counted and receive what supper the family could spare. He had spent, but few months at school previous to his shepherd's life (that was when there

was a *maestro* in his village), but even so he had learnt to read a little, spelling out the words, and even to write. He carried in his blouse a small ragged Spanish *calendario* and asked to be sent books "such as would interest me and in my own language." The two chief desires he expressed were that the Government should continue the roads that were begun in order to give the *hurdanos* work, and that there should be a schoolmaster in his village to teach his children to read. Although we had set out with the stars in order to do that fearful ascent in the cool of the day, the full heat caught us long before we had reached Las Calabazas. That wise and saintly poet San Juan de la Cruz says that if fruit be planted in a lonely place and unguarded, wayfarers (*viadores*) will eat it. After we had sat for some time under a great vine loaded with splendid bunches of black grapes in the hills above La Huerta Juan, who knew shepherd ways, said that it was the shepherds: *lo habrán comido los pastores*. Without venturing to decide between saint and simpleton, one may confidently assert that no *agraz* or *horchata de chufas* of Madrid's Calle de Alcalá was ever half so excellent or refreshing as bunches of cool black grapes eaten from the vine on a parched hill-side under an August sun in Las Hurdes. The villages Cenia, La Huerta, Las Calabazas and El Pino, the last village of Las Hurdes (thus corresponding with Las Mestas to the north), lie in a richer country, with abundance of fruit and olives, chestnuts, vines. Some of the



VALENCIA

A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW, SHOWING THE CATHEDRAL AND THE MIGUELETE ON THE RIGHT



houses of Las Calabazas are whitewashed and their corners washed with blue. The inn has a large upper room with three tiny alcoves for beds a foot below the floor of the room and chairs all along its walls. Below this a dark room on the ground-floor with benches and low three-legged stools forms the tavern. Immediately at the head of the steep stairs is the small kitchen with a raised square in the centre for the fire and a great chestnut *escaño* at the side. And here it may be said that no one who cares for his own comfort or health will ever sleep in a bed in Las Hurdes. If he cannot sleep out of doors his best plan will be to ask to be allowed to sleep on the *escaño* in the kitchen, paying a peseta as for a bed. The kitchens are mostly bare and clean, and there will be a small window which he can open. After a long *siesta* spent under a magnificent chestnut-tree surrounded by vines heavy with black grapes, we dined in state at our inn. In the cool of the evening women were coming into the village from their *huertas* with baskets of plums and grapes or with cobs and flower of maize. They disappeared one by one into black doorways above which wide balconies of slate almost met across the street. Our fare was chiefly a kind of mash of bread and tomatoes, bread being still somewhat of a luxury in these parts, with various delicacies such as raw ham, raw sausage of a gorgeous hue between that of saffron and tomato, and a sort of white cheese. Presently the guide departed to sleep at the house of a friend in the village.

## II

¡ Qué país, Andrés, el de las Batuecas !

J. M. DE LARRA.

Pleasant it is to sleep on a kitchen *escaño* by the grey clean ashes of last night's wood fire, but nights spent in the open in the Hurdes country, between the heather and the stars, or in the dry bed of a stream, are an unforgettable delight. What though wild boars wake the sleeper at midnight, crashing down a mountain-side or splashing heavily in a stream—they do not attack unless themselves attacked, and a shout suffices to send them away, magnified to giant size and measureless ferocity in the dim uncertain light of moon or stars. One may so sleep by the river of Batuecas and watch the stars stand like glowing lamps on the lofty mountain-tops and then—if one dozes a little—apparently leap into mid-heaven. No one who has not so slept in a deep mountain gorge can properly realize the heavenly magnificence of the night's procession of stars, which the dark mountains set out in full relief, nor know the many changing voices of a mountain stream. The crystal stream of Batuecas, after babbling sunnily all the afternoon, changes its song in the afterglow to a quieter, almost sleepy murmur, and at midnight it croons more intermittently in its sleep, with half-silences and crystal notes of oblivion and peace. Indeed it has four voices, of dawn, day, dusk, and night, and further has a special melody for nights of full moon and another for dark nights of stars. But when we rose early to continue our

journey from Las Calabazas there were no stars, and the sky which had hitherto been clear appeared more threatening. It was not seven when we arrived at El Casal de Palomero, the largest and richest village of Las Hurdes. It is in a beautiful position above the Rio de los Angeles (River of Angels) and beneath the fine wooded mountain Altamira (Highview), commonly called Santa Barbara, from the summit of which Plasencia may be seen. El Casal is very picturesque by reason of its various degrees of prosperity. There are houses of brick and of slate (with or without mortar), of slate in layers between timber, houses whitewashed and pink and light blue and green, or roughly dabbed all over with an almost *azafran*-coloured mortar. The Plaza Mayor has a fountain and a clock—probably the only clock in Las Hurdes—balconies of flowers, arcades of wooden and of stone columns, a *café* with a space at the back which serves as a theatre, a *farmacia*, and in fact all the appurtenances of civilization. Butchers were selling some nondescript meat on little stalls beneath the arcades, women were coming in with great brimming baskets of green figs and apples and plums. Here the guide began to swell visibly, indeed his head seemed a little turned by this metropolis and he spent the more readily because he had no money of his own. His spacious blouse began to bulge out with apples and matchboxes; he insisted on purchasing some raw meat in a piece of brown paper: it was only when he mentioned



casually that he was thinking of acquiring a few pumpkins or melons to take home that he was sternly hurried away from this dazzling city of temptation. One may not hope always to be able to change a note in Las Hurdes, and it is necessary to go well provided with heavy *duros* and *perras*. This supply Juan carried; it is to be feared that his accounts were never quite accurate, although the deficit was small: he would slur over the last few pesetas with a comical, shamefaced assertion that "fué el señorito." This was the more villainous in that if ever he was asked for money to buy cigarettes, or for *perras* to give to famished *hurdano* children, he would first not hear at all, then say that he had no change, and only at the third time of asking grudgingly produce the sum required, which would be always the first to be mentioned in his accounts. Our way now went through heather and grey-white thyme, cistus, arbutus and lentisk to delightful Oveja, a colourless little slate village in olives, chestnuts, and cork-trees. Its tiny streets are steep and narrow, its houses dark and low, with one or two bare rooms. Three women in black, with a lighted lantern, stood by a house-door as we passed, waiting for priest and *viatico*, and many hours would they have to wait. We hurried on under a darkening sky. From time to time the sun would send gleams along the hills, and somehow one thought of the West of Scotland on a day of sun and rain. The wind rustled in the heather and occasionally collecting a little dust on the narrow path

would send it in a whirling cloud in our faces. “*Va querer llover*,” quoth Juan (“It is going to wish to rain”). For the wind showed a tendency to change to the rain-bringing *Gallego*, great clouds rolled up blackening the *sierras*, on which magnificent heath-fires stood out the more magnificent, immense tongues of flame, red as at night, lengthening and springing and writhing in the wind. In intervals of calm we could distinctly hear the voracious roar of a distant fire leaping rapidly with a clamour of fierce rejoicing up a whole mountain-side. At Cambronciño we made a few minutes’ stay. It is a picturesque, poverty-stricken place divided into three separate quarters. Don Vicente, the *parroco*, showed us the great church, probably the largest in Las Hurdes. It is for the most part bare, but has some ancient images of wood and a curious old crucifix. The church is fittingly called *Nuestra Señora de las Lástimas*. Juan suggested that we should buy two *perras* (the *perra* here is really a *perrilla* or halfpenny) of grapes, and a pleasant-faced woman in black went to her vine and brought us far more black grapes than we could carry. But when it came to paying she had no change. One woman called to another up the street for change of a peseta, but in vain. Then someone cried, “Here comes *María la Tabernera*.” She was the rich woman of the village, and after a considerable time produced the change from the dark recesses of the tavern. A further outlay of three *perrillas* gave us a *quartillo* of red wine which had the very taste of

vinegar. Juan, who was averse from waste, drank on heroically, replenishing his glass. The rest of our great coin was distributed among the children of the village, Juan, whether he was glad at his economy in finishing that appalling drink or thought that he had acquired the fruit cheap, protesting less than was his wont against the extravagance. At Cambronciño lived the *gaitero*, that is the man who makes the wooden pipes of two stops tipped with horn for the shepherds of all that country-side, but he was from home, *está forastero* was their phrase. A short flight of stone steps led up from the street into the *taberna*, a pitch-black room entirely windowless and of intense heat owing to a smouldering fire on the centre of the floor. The village itself is set in chestnuts, olives and pines; beyond, a mountain-side covered with pines has lost hundreds of trees, heedlessly *chamuscados* by a heath fire. It was not till well on in the afternoon, after Juan Valencia had departed by a mountain-path to his village of Cerezal, that rain fell and a welcome refuge was provided by an olive-oil press near Las Vegas de Coria. With chain-smoking of cigarettes (for the smell of last year's oil was oppressive, and there were mosquitoes) it proved an excellent retreat, and the smoke of such cigarettes as Las Hurdes furnished was too much even for the mosquitoes. On the huge central beam, formed of a great tree-trunk, were nailed fourteen small wooden crosses. It was evening, as it had been a few days before, when the single street of Las Vegas de Coria along the Rio

Malo came in sight. The great single vines (*parras*) all about were heavy with black grapes ; the inhabitants now as then were sitting white-faced and listless by their doors in the street taking the evening air. An aged man was there as before,

vecchierel bianco, infermo,  
scalzo e mezzo vestito,

alive, one presumed ; indeed he spoke, and his teeth stood out prominently like those of a skull ; he even smiled, a dreadful death's grin more terrible than tears. He appeared to be starving, he had the fever, they said. A flabby white-faced child of ten was crying : she too had the *calentura*. This was said to be one of the better villages of Las Hurdes, and its inhabitants were in fact better dressed than those of the small mountain-villages, but suffered in health from the neighbourhood of the river. The priest, a young man, Don Domingo, who before had been sitting, in cassock and biretta, under the vine trellis of his humble house, now stood in the middle of the street with a village child in his arms, his open cassock showing his brown velveteen trousers. He was presently button-holed by a very tall gaunt man, dressed soberly in black and carrying in his hand an immense stick with a handle like that of a shepherd's crook. He had a large hooked nose, and his face had the look of a bird of prey, but withal a sad disappointed expression as of an unsuccessful bird of prey. His forehead was pitted with curious deep furrows of care. Unlike the needy knife-grinder, he had a

story to tell and seemed permanently desirous of telling it, in street or inn. Later by the tavern fire over a *quartillo* of wine served in one of the flowered *jarrillos* common throughout Las Hurdes, he again poured forth his pitiful story. It appeared that the inhabitants of these parts are accustomed to buy their boots on the instalment plan, and he was a cobbler from distant Alberca riding on his mule from village to village to recover his dues. He thus found himself much in the position of a tax-collector and met with a hundred difficulties and evasions. It was a harrowing tale, and he was a worthy man, but not astute. Thus in the very public street of Las Vegas he announced his intention of riding on early next morning to Arrolobo, a hamlet so near that, in the stereotyped expression, one can go thither from Las Vegas with one's *cigarro* alight, i.e. in less time than it takes to smoke a cigarette. Tio Martín of the *taberna* came in at dusk from the fields and sat down in his wet clothes to a piece of bread and white cheese and a glass of wine. His was one of the prosperous households of the village, and his good-looking young wife—she was but half his age—kept everything scrupulously clean. He had seen a good of military service in 1880 at Madrid, Valladolid, and Barcelona, and along the French frontier, and had then come back to settle in his village. The house looked out on the other side on to a beautiful view of fruit trees, river, and cistus-covered hills. The window was really a door, for it consisted of a great

shutter opening upon a balcony formed solely of a slab of slate, without railing of any kind. One was thus positively invited to the drop of a considerable height with, half-way down, the sharp roof of a shed to break one's fall, or one's head. One of the children had already fallen out, unhurt, and the small girl looked forward to the same adventure with a sort of fearful pleasure. Next morning, under a sky brilliant with stars, an early start was made to cross the very broad dry stony bed of a branch of the river and find the path leading to Arrolobo. It runs through great shrubs of heather, cistus, lentisk, and arbutus, with here and there a few stately single asphodels. Arrolobo is a beautiful tiny cluster of slate hovels half buried in fruit trees and great *parras*, with the sound of running water all about it. The advantage of going to Arrolobo (besides the pleasure of seeing so charming a place) was that thence one could return by a different way from that previously taken from Las Mestas to Las Vegas. And no more characteristic and beautiful scenery and no fairer weather could have been chosen for one's last day in Las Hurdes. The narrow bridlepath wandered as usual up and down bare solitary hills covered with cistus and thyme, lentisk with its privet-like white flowers and bitter tiny black berries, heather, arbutus. The shrubs after last evening's rain gave forth even more than their wonted scent, and the cloudless sky, washed to a delicate and lovely turquoise, was so clear that it seemed one might cut it into

millions of hard and exquisite gems. One met very few wayfarers—a postman on foot with his thin locked letter-wallet, a party of men on mules riding to Las Vegas, and four pleasant-faced wrinkled *vecinos* of Arrolobo riding into the hills to visit their beehives. Round black felt hats, loose blouses of intense blue, brown corduroy trousers and leathern *zahones*, one could see them very distinctly far away as they rode in single file along the bare hills. They were a merry party, but one thought of the care-worn troubled *zapatero* of Alberca who had announced his intention of visiting their village this day in his thorny pursuit of debtors, and could not help suspecting that it was not solely to see their *colmenas* that they jogged so gaily along on their donkeys up and down the cistus bridlepath this lovely morning, or at least that their choice of a day had been fortunate. Arrolobo has but eighteen *vecinos*, and here were four of them quite beyond the cobbler's clutches. The point at which one comes into view of Las Mestas and the mountains beyond is one of the moments of life at which one would wish to stop the clock for an hour or a week or a month of happy contemplation, and which the wise do actually concentrate in their memory to flash upon that inward eye which is the bliss of solitude. I had intended to sleep between Las Mestas and Las Batuecas, but wandered on till the convent itself was in view, and it was beneath the very wall of its *finca* that I spread my bed of soft thick heather on a smooth

scooped rock in the centre of the stream which went whirling by on either side. There was some daylight left, and after a frugal supper I read in one of the two tiny Pickerings I carried with me, and the last line I read was :

*δύσετό τ' ἥλιος σκίωοντό τε πᾶσαι ἀγόναι.*

(And the sun set and all the ways were darkened.)  
And I took up the other volume in the failing light, and the last line I read was :

*E venni dal martirio a questa pace.*

After the stony paths and sad scenes of Las Hurdes the line might well describe a wanderer's feelings on arriving at this peaceful scene. The gorge is so narrow that when longer falls the shadow from one mountain rampart it really does not fall, but creeps up the opposite height. And a lovely sight it is to watch the shadow darkening the steep woods and screes till for a moment only the craggy summits, towering like magnificent gigantic castles, have the sun and are purple. The purple glow is so swiftly gone from them that probably it is but rarely seen, yet it is entirely unlike the light that is extinguished on the mountain-side. The crags relapsed swiftly into their grey and the first stars were silver in a sky that still preserved its clear turquoise blue. The beautiful woods darkened along the crystal-singing river, and two dead leafy branches hanging from a tree might be taken for two Carmelite brothers returning to the convent. But I had been discovered by the convent's herdsman, driving down his herd of over two hundred



goats to be milked, a pleasant handsome man, plentifully protected with leather, a great axe slung at his belt, with which a few days before, with the help of his two dogs, he had valiantly slain a wild boar on the hills. And now with many exclamations in the semi-darkness appeared a cheerful little cowled Carmelite brother, whose acquaintance had previously been made at the convent. He was scarce taller than a hollyhock or madonna lily. He robbed me of my night of stars, he would hear of no excuses, the nights were cold by the river, I must obey and be hurried into the convent. "Night is a dead, monotonous period under a roof," yet, curiously, in the monotonous cell of a convent it loses its monotony. A bare white cell with small wooden table and trestle-bed, a magnificent view of woods, mountains and stars, an ancient folio of the works of San Juan de la Cruz, and an Italian clock which told each quarter with a tone of wonderful beauty, angelically soft but deep and clear, fully made up for a last night *à la belle étoile*. The reason for sleeping in this hollow was to take the tremendous ascent in the cool of the morning. The monks are up at five, so that there was no need to be called by the dawn. As one mounts that many-winding mountain-way one finds that each neck on the opposite side screened range on range of bare softly-folding mountains, brown and grey and green and blue, till at last one has a full view of all the desolation of the Hurdes country, and presently Alberca appears brown round its grey



SOME INHABITANTS OF CACERES  
A VILLAGE OF LAS HURDES



square church in chestnuts. And as one goes one half wishes to return and see more of those charming cistus-scented hills and the wonderful dwellers in their hollows, from which the traveller returns with the feeling that he has been visiting Avernus and communing with lifeless shades whose white faces will for ever haunt him. A cold breath from the Meadows of Asphodel hovers about him as he climbs the steep stony path to the upper air. The vivid unforgettable impression that they make is perhaps partly due, as in certain Alpine villages, to the contrast between their appalling misery and the beauty of the surrounding country. Surely, one thinks, if anywhere health should reign among these villages set in chestnuts and fruit trees, with the purest air and water, blown upon by the winds across scented solitudes. Yet in all that region one meets scarcely a man, woman, or child truly robust and healthy. It is partly no doubt a question of race and of listlessness born of many generations of neglect and misery. The fact remains that the country produces no corn, and potatoes are not a very inspiring substitute. Whether it might not be made to produce corn if the hill-sides were first sown with potatoes and so gradually prepared for rye and wheat is another matter. Any *vecino* is at liberty untaxed to cultivate land belonging to his village, but he is afraid of the *contribución*, he says, that will come as soon as he has rendered the land productive: afraid too, one suspects, of hard work for so distant a reward. (The real ambition

of the peasant is to have a gun and to stroll idly over the hills on the pretence of shooting a *jabali*.) Yet even a few yards cultivated now can be doubled later on, and so gradually in a few generations misery beaten back and stamped out. The listlessness of the *hurdanos* is partly due to the fact that much of their work proves useless. Wild boars share their crops, devouring grapes and tomatoes and pumpkins, and working havoc among the plants; goatherds help themselves to the fruit that is out of reach of the *jabalies*; the prickly shells that bristle all over the chestnut trees prove many of them empty (*vanas*) if August continue rainless. And there is sometimes a false air of prosperity about the villages; for instance, the many olive-trees round Las Mestas and Cambronciño belong to rich Alberca, from which men ride down to examine the promise of the trees early in the year and come with mules in autumn to carry away the olives. The *hurdanos* themselves go to work at the harvest in more fertile parts of Extremadura, earning some five or six *reales* a day and their food; others emigrate to Argentina. Those left at home feel their lives all the more aimless and neglected. "We are only happy when asleep," averred a woman in one village, and another, when asked if there was no doctor, pointed skyward and answered, "*Del cielo*," that is, "Death is our doctor; we live and die at the will of Heaven." Another poor woman said that the doctor of El Casal de Palomero, scarcely two hours' walk from her village, Cam-

bronciño, had charged her twenty-five pesetas for his visit. The priest too requires his thirty *reales* for a funeral and ten or more, usually fifteen, pesetas for a wedding. The peasants club together to provide this sum, but often a wedding has to be put off many years. Those who must come to Las Hurdes with guides should bring men skilled in sandal-making or basket-making or some similar art which they may teach the *hurdanos*. But indeed a guide is unnecessary. It is true that there are many ways among the hills and that there is not a building of any kind between village and village, and no sign of life save perhaps a yellow-brown viper or a cicada showing vivid blue in its flight across the path, or perhaps the sound of a man lopping chestnut branches in some hidden hollow of the hills—a sign that a village is not many miles distant. But even if you leave a village before daylight you will always find some of the more energetic villagers going out to their work who will set you on the right path. Only it is well not to rely overmuch on the *hurdano's* estimate of distance. If a *pastor* on the hills tell you that you have only two short leagues to go, *dos leguas cortitas*, or a wrinkled old woman bowed under a load of brushwood say *adelantito*, “it is just a little farther on,” or a tottering old man with a face of yellowed ivory and quavering voice declare that he would undertake to arrive there with his *cigarro* alight, then beware and make haste if you would reach your destination before nightfall. Besides the

kindly directions of the peasants you will moreover nearly always find someone going with his donkey from one village to another who will willingly act as your guide. Thus at the miserable village of Rubiaco Tio Juan was returning with his ass and a sack of rye through Nuñomoral to his native Murtilandran. He was a spare little man neatly dressed in black and scrupulously shaven, his face was pale, but his features had a rather sinister expression. He was the richest and, said his friends, the most miserly and cold-hearted man of his village. The conversation as we went was of the *contribuciones* and the heavy marriage fee, of the price of donkeys, and how a whole house might be had for ten *duros* whereas an ass would cost eighteen or twenty; of the poverty and neglect of Las Hurdes, of the excellences of Murtilandran and of its water, which was so famous that it had even been sent to Madrid. Or a peasant coming down from the hills would ask the price of olive-oil "there below," and stand aghast at its dearness when told that it was four *duros* the *cántaro*; or Tio Juan would tell him of a friend newly arrived from Buenos Aires, "and his boots cost fifteen *duros*." Murtilandran is the most poverty-stricken village imaginable, rising colourless out of rock on a precipitous rocky hill falling sheerly to a small stream. It was a Sunday, a day which the villagers observe by sitting idly about their doors. The scores of assembled villagers is a strange, never-to-be-forgotten sight. Even the photograph "Pueblo

hurdano" in "Alpinismo Castellano," by Andrés Pérez Cardenal (1914), p. 125, gives but a faint idea of the misery. Most of them wore but two garments, patched, torn and ragged, and their white faces and silent furtive movements gave one the impression that they were scarcely of this world and that here was some wonderful modern caricature of the Hades of the Ancients. Yet the sun shone with August heat, the stream below flowed through chestnut-trees bristling with light-green shells, and the water of the spring in the rock deserved all Tio Juan's praises. He was distinguished from his fellow-villagers by an air of decision. He might have been a ruler over them. He even owned two houses. One had two rooms, one for the ass, opening on to one street, another above it opening on to another street at right angles to the first. (All the streets of Murtilandran resemble the beds of mountain torrents.) This latter room was for human habitation and was littered with a strange medley of chests, jars, sacks, stools, and pumpkins. Opposite it was the second house, consisting of a single story divided into a series of low black rooms. One might have thought that a five-peseta piece had never been seen in this village, yet Tio Juan produced ten gleaming *duros* in exchange for a fifty-peseta note. Generally the *hurdanos* have a very shrewd idea of the meaning of money. It is worth while to make no bargain beforehand in order to see what sums they will charge, and they vary enormously. At one village



for a supper consisting of an omelette of three eggs (a considerable luxury) and potatoes, a little bread and a glass of good wine, the charge was five-pence; at an even smaller village for a bowl of coffee, brayed with a brazen pestle in a tiny brazen mortar, and fresh goat's milk the charge was twenty-five pence. At Murtilandran there was no inn, nor hope of bed or board, but Tio Juan had invited me to share his dinner and produced a huge earthenware bowl of smoking hot beans and boiled potatoes which had been cooking by the wood-ashes of his fire since the morning. But we were soon in a pretty predicament. We were both to eat out of the dish, we were both hungry; but while I could not eat it with olive-oil he could not eat it without. Less fortunate than Jack Sprat and his wife, we spent some time in solemn deliberation, punctuated by his exclamations of incredulity that I should prefer to eat it without condiments. Finally with true hospitality he insisted that I should eat first while he looked on hungrily, and if I showed signs of slackening in this wholesome but somewhat monotonous meal he would encourage me much as he might urge on his ass: *Usted coma, usted coma.*

Some of the houses in Las Hurdes have but two rooms, pitch-dark and windowless, without bed, chair or table; a corner and sometimes a whole half of one of the rooms is occupied by a great mound of potatoes, showing very white in the darkness. Most of the houses, however, have also an upper story and here is the kitchen, the largest and pleasantest

room in the house. The floor is of wood, or more often of slabs of slate the size of tombstones. Over the fire of cistus and heather and—best fuel of all—olive prunings hangs a huge caldron with food for the pigs, and in the ashes lie the small hand tongs (*tenazas*), while on a shelf hard by stands the great earthenware *calboquero*, with many holes, for roasting chestnuts, and from the wall hang two or three tiny lamps in shape not unlike those of ancient Rome. Under the roof, about six feet from the floor, is a trellis-work of wooden laths on which chestnuts are placed to be smoked above the fire and eaten later in the year as *piludas*, and not only above the fire, for the trellis forms the ceiling of the whole room and there is no chimney. Rooms in the more pretentious houses have their walls washed yellow, with daubs of white singly or in trefoils. In the blackest corner of the kitchen you will often see a splotch of white: it is the face of the poor little *hospiciano*. Or you will find the children of the house playing together in a room or dancing round their mother who is cutting them slices from one of the rare loaves of bread that come to Las Hurdes, and in another room a sad white-faced child sitting dejected and alone. If you ask whether he is one of the family the woman will answer: "Indeed no; that . . ." She may say no more, but the tone in which it is spoken emphasizes the pathos and misery of the *hospiciano's* life, even if the children do not hasten to add that he is "the servant." The happiest moments of the *hurdano's*

life are the evening hours round the hearth in winter, or rather in late autumn before their winter stocks of food are running low. They sit clustering together on the great chestnut *escaño* and on three-legged stools and gossip and sing snatches of song, while the chestnuts crackle in the *calboquero* and the wind moans and whistles in the cracks of the roof. The roof is always of large slabs of black slate; the walls are also built of slate, but in smaller, thicker chunks, without mortar, and of a yellow-brown or reddish hue. The *hurdano* is deeply religious, indeed his neglected state seems to set him in more direct relation with God and the saints, while he cares comparatively little for the priests and the church. The way from Murtilandran to Nuñomoral is two leagues of exceedingly rough and steep mountain-path, and those who come down to Mass at the latter village are few indeed. For burial they are carried down, and even from El Gasco, the last village on that side and twice as far as Murtilandran from Nuñomoral. The cemetery is a curious witness to *hurdano* poverty: a large square piece of ground outside the village, surrounded by a low wall of loose slate, with a plain gate of unpainted weather-stained wood. And that is all: there is neither monument nor cross nor stone—just an enclosed field of rough grass and heather, with little mounds. In its simplicity it puts to shame the tawdry monuments of great towns.

Instead of returning to Fuente de San Esteban

from Sequeros it is worth taking the *diligencia* to the curious but little-known town of Bejar. The forty kilometres of road are mostly very good, but we met not a single motor-car. Yesterday, said the driver, he had met one. The road does not actually pass through any villages, but one sees them, picturesque brown-tiled roofs and granite walls on the hills: Villanueva, Garcibuey, Miranda del Castañar, Santibañez, Cristobal (clear-sounding names well suited to these delightful villages and their open-faced pleasant inhabitants), and the post-men wait patiently for the village letters at the roadside. The driver of the *diligencia* returns on the following day to Sequeros. A man of greater catholicity in the matter of drinks was never seen. Some of his commissions are paid for in kind, and he drank copiously from two large bottles of red wine at his side, as well as from a traveller's *bota*. He then, having finished a tin of sardines, mixed red wine with the oil in the tin and drank it off with evident gusto. A little later, after more wine, his drink at a tiny inn was milk and coffee, after which he fell asleep on the box and woke up declaring that coffee always made him sleepy. Let it not be thought, however, that his path is entirely of roses, for it is in fact beset with perplexities. Besides the ever-lurking fear that an automobile service will one day come and take the bread out of his mouth, he has to strive to remember many commissions, some of which are easily forgotten and others difficult of execution. One woman gave him a

dozen loose eggs in a basket and he had himself to get down and pack them in bracken. Another entrusted him with a letter addressed to "Ines, *modista*," in Bejar. Now Bejar is not an immense town, but it has 9,000 or 10,000 inhabitants, among whom the luckless driver must proceed to search for Ines the dressmaker.

Several remedies have been suggested for the conditions prevailing in Las Hurdes. The only cure, says one, is to build roads and railways, but this would at most affect those villages which even now are moderately prosperous. You must sweep away the more remote miserable hamlets, says another, and bring down their inhabitants into one of the better villages. Against this is the fact that the inhabitants of these hamlets, half naked and starved as they are, are intensely attached to them, and that they have excellent air and water and should be healthier than in the larger villages. If the *hurdanos* show any will at all it is in their unwillingness to leave their rocks and hovels. In one of the poorest and most remote villages lives a young and apparently strong man who has done his military service at Madrid (the number of *hurdanos* passed for military service is very small), yet who is content to live here doing nothing, or extremely little, and dressed in less—two garments which have entirely disappeared in patches, so that they resemble a flowing stream. In another village an older man, who as a soldier has seen much of the world, is happy cut off from all the world, without

doctor, priest, or school. In the matter of roads the Government seems to have been as aimless as the *hurdanos* themselves: one comes across large pieces of road in Las Hurdes left unfinished, or a magnificent bridge without corresponding road. Now that the Spanish Exchequer is not quite bankrupt it is to be hoped that work will be continued at least during the months of March, April and May of each year, so that the *hurdanos* may be able to earn their bread during these their famine months. But this would at best be only a palliative. Real remedy there would seem to be only one: to leave the grown generations to their fate and take the children altogether away from the region of Las Hurdes, to a really good school where they would be well fed, clothed, and educated free of all expense to their parents during a period of ten years. The freedom from expense would be the only way of securing the consent of the *hurdanos* to such a plan, since they are fond of money. It is this greed which accounts for one of the most horrible, almost incredible evils in Las Hurdes: the traffic in foundlings. Hundreds of children are taken from the *hospicios* of Plasencia and Caceres to starve in this region of famine. For a baby the nurse receives two *duros* a month (ten pesetas) during the first two years. For boys of six the payment is fifty *duros* in three instalments with the condition that he is to be maintained till the age of twelve and to receive a sum of not less than twenty *duros* when he settles in life. The condition that

he should be maintained by families who are obliged to beg their bread in the spring of most years is a singular piece of irony. It is not difficult to realize that a foundling sent to Las Hurdes is almost certain to grow up miserable, stunted, starved bodily and spiritually. Sometimes the children are well treated, but it appears that almost invariably only the first instalment of money is received, which does not help to make him a favourite in the family, and in any case when the family starves the *hospiciano* starves first. A further suggestion is that since the *hurdanos* hug their rocks and their rags an ever-increasing number of *forasteros* should personally carry money and ideas to them. Mahomet must go to the mountain. Let all those who love hills and heather, and clear streams and the cool shade of chestnut-trees, and do not mind roughing it and sleeping in tents, spend two or three days in this region, following the noble example set by King Alfonso. The number of villages in Las Hurdes may be about thirty. Of these some have under a hundred inhabitants, while the largest, El Casal de Palomero, is comparatively prosperous. The number of poverty-stricken *hurdanos* is but a few thousands—two or three thousand. These might surely be taught some special handiwork. No one who has seen in these villages a mother and child like a ghastly allegory or rather caricature of famine, children white and listless, old men like hobbling skeletons with white or yellow parchment drawn tight over the bones of their face, with eyes sunk in

deep pits, can ever forget them, any more than he will forget the cistus-scented wildernesses and transparent streams of these health-giving hills, or the pathetic figure, stunted by hard work and hunger, of the imported *hospiciano*. One rich man could do much for Las Hurdes, a society of fifty men bound to the delightful penance of spending a fortnight of their holiday yearly in these brown hills could put an end to the present conditions in a generation. Here, as so often, the remedy lies with the individual quite as much as with the State.

Bejar is a little industrial town, its chief manufactures being cloth and leather. It consists of a single immensely long street—poor tall verandaed houses of granite and whitewash, five or six churches, and the great castle of the Dukes of Bejar, those keen patrons of letters in the sixteenth century, now used as a barracks—on a steep hill above the river Cuerpo de Hombre (Body of Man), and below a mountain thickly wooded with chestnut-trees and a few lines of poplars. Behind this rises the great bare back of the Candelario mountain, with its last long streaks of snow even in September. Hardy *neveros* (snowmen) from Bejar and the village of Candelario go up before sunrise to its deep snow gullies and bring down thousands of pounds of snow daily, hard as ice, into the oppressive heat below. For summer is hot at Bejar (over 3,000 feet above the sea), while snow, unknown at neighbouring Plasencia, falls there in winter. The sides of many of the houses are formed entirely of inverted



tiles, often with a coat of whitewash. But Bejar is truly Castilian in its ancient customs, and its massive old crumbling walls show that it was not always a place of peace. Four horses pull one from the railway station, and splendid old *diligencias* clash and clatter over the cobbled streets, sometimes rousing loud echoes in the silence that reigns after ten o'clock at night. The slow *sereno*, robed funereally in an ample black cloak reaching to his feet, has the air of a sinister inquisitor, and sings the hours solemnly, not musically, but with an almost harsh air of authority, as of one who can use his *chuzo* at need: *las doce y sereno*. The last word is sharp and abrupt, unlike the delightfully melodious chant of the night watchmen in some other towns. Plasencia is far more Castilian in character, a little cathedral city unspotted by the world. The names of its streets are significant: Calle de Alfonso VIII (not XIII, a difference of nearly ten centuries), Calle de los Reyes Católicos, Calle de la Encarnacion, Rincon de San Esteban, Plazuela del Dean. Intensely Castilian in its granite arcades and *patios* and narrow streets, cobbled and lined with granite slabs, in the coats-of-arms, the flower-filled iron balconies, the ancient city walls out of which houses and churches grow naturally, the pleasant *fonda* of Felipe Gonzalez, with floor and stairs and pillars of granite. Yet in some of the long narrow streets most of the houses are whitewashed, and this, with the many flowers and the tail-pieces of blue sky, gives them an Anda-

lusian look. The climate combines the fiery sun of Castille with the hot air of Portugal, and renders some weeks in summer all but intolerable. The prevailing granite, however, keeps Plasencia cool. All that one need ask of a southern county is that it should have granite and chestnut-trees: one will then have pleasant shade, coolness in heat, and delicious streams of transparent water. Plasencia lies in the heart of hills and mountains and the little river Jerte flows round it below. About the whole place there is a look of cleanliness, peace and cheerful friendliness somehow recalling Avila. "Venga Usted con Dios," the greeting as one enters one of the small shops, seems to be the city's motto. Most delightful are the popular streets on a lower level beneath the walls of the town, leading from the Plaza Mayor or Plaza de la Reina (no Plaza de la Constitucion for Plasencia). Here is a street of little inns, to meet the wants of incoming peasants and *diligencias*: the Parador de Manuel el Castellano, the Parador de Fidel Bermejo, Parador del Macoterano, Parador del Alba (the Inn of Dawn), or a little eating-house, *figon* (a shade below the *mason* as the *mason* is below the *venta*, and the *venta* below the *posada*, and the *posada* below the *parador*, and the *parador* below the *fonda*), or a small bake-house (*tahona*), scented and scrupulously clean, with its bundles of broom ready for the oven, or the shop of a *botero* with its great four-legged pig-skins, such as Don Quixote slew, and the small *botas* carried by all wayfarers in Spain. And there is no

lack of colour in Plasencia, colours soft and various, such as those worn by the woman yonder coming from the fountain. A dark red-brown water-jar is set on her long golden kerchief; her blouse is pink, her skirt lightest purple, her apron black. The saddest thing in Plasencia is the old cathedral. Although it is not large and has been mutilated to make way for the new cathedral (the strange carved choir stalls of which have excited the scandalized admiration of generations of travellers), in its simplicity and beautiful proportions it might be—it was—one of the noblest of the noble cathedrals of Spain. But in the nineteenth century an evil spirit entered into certain men with brushes, and they thickly covered the whole cathedral with divers washes, soaring plain granite pillars, beautifully carved capitals, cloisters, everything. A small part has now been restored, that is relieved of the whitewash; but the task proceeds slowly, and even in the restored portions the work of the vandals has all too clearly left its mark. Plasencia and Cáceres and a dozen other small towns of Extremadura are worth a visit. It is a region too little known to foreigners, as indeed are the remoter parts of Catalonia and Galicia, Andalucía, and Castille. The old customs and costumes will not abide for ever, and artists and lovers of things beautiful and ancient should hasten to make hay while the sun still shines.

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